

Mexican Life

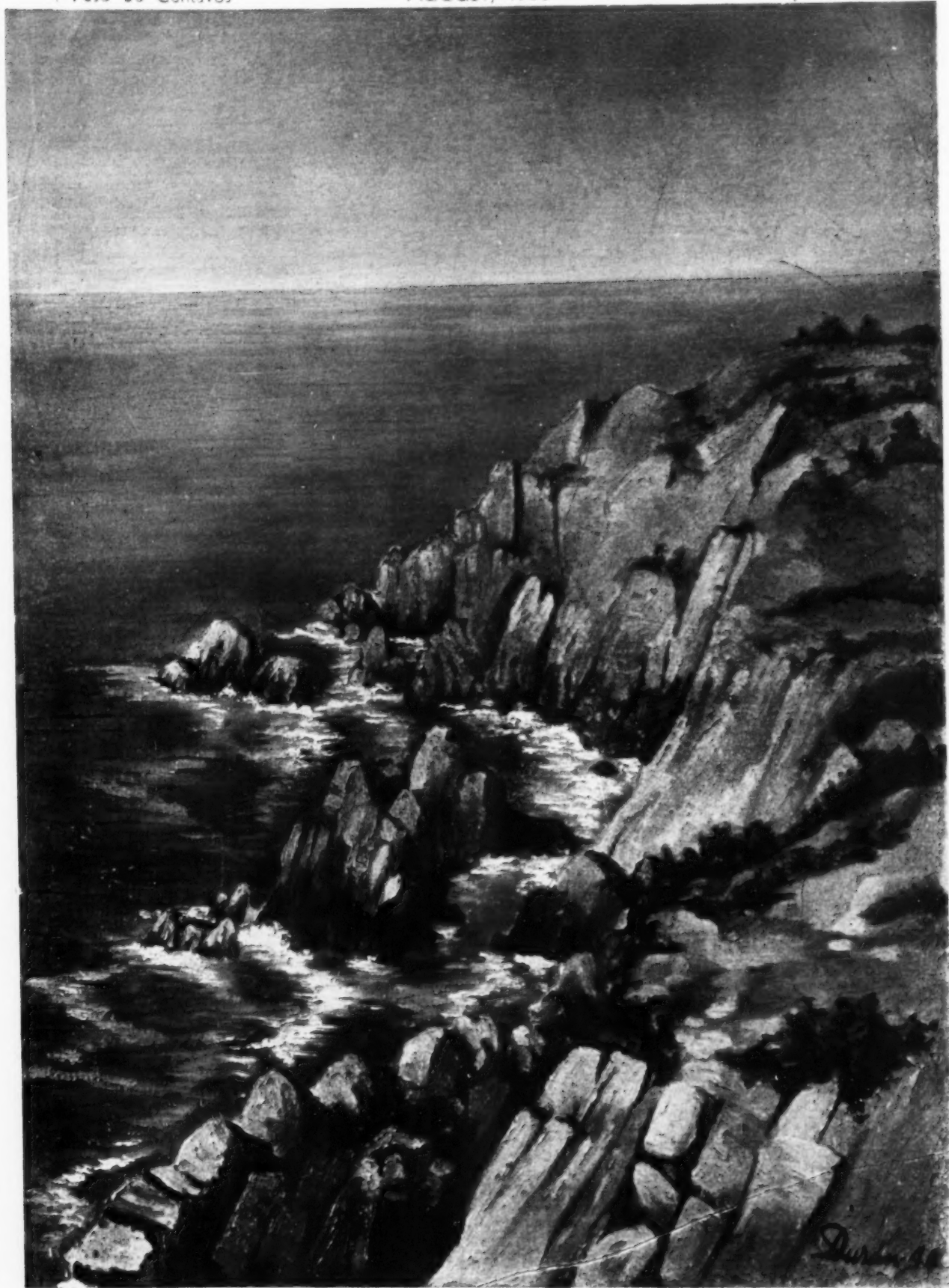
Mexico's Monthly Review

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AUGUST, 1953

No. 8, Vol. XXIX



Oil

CLIFFS AT ACAPULCO

By Adrian Durán



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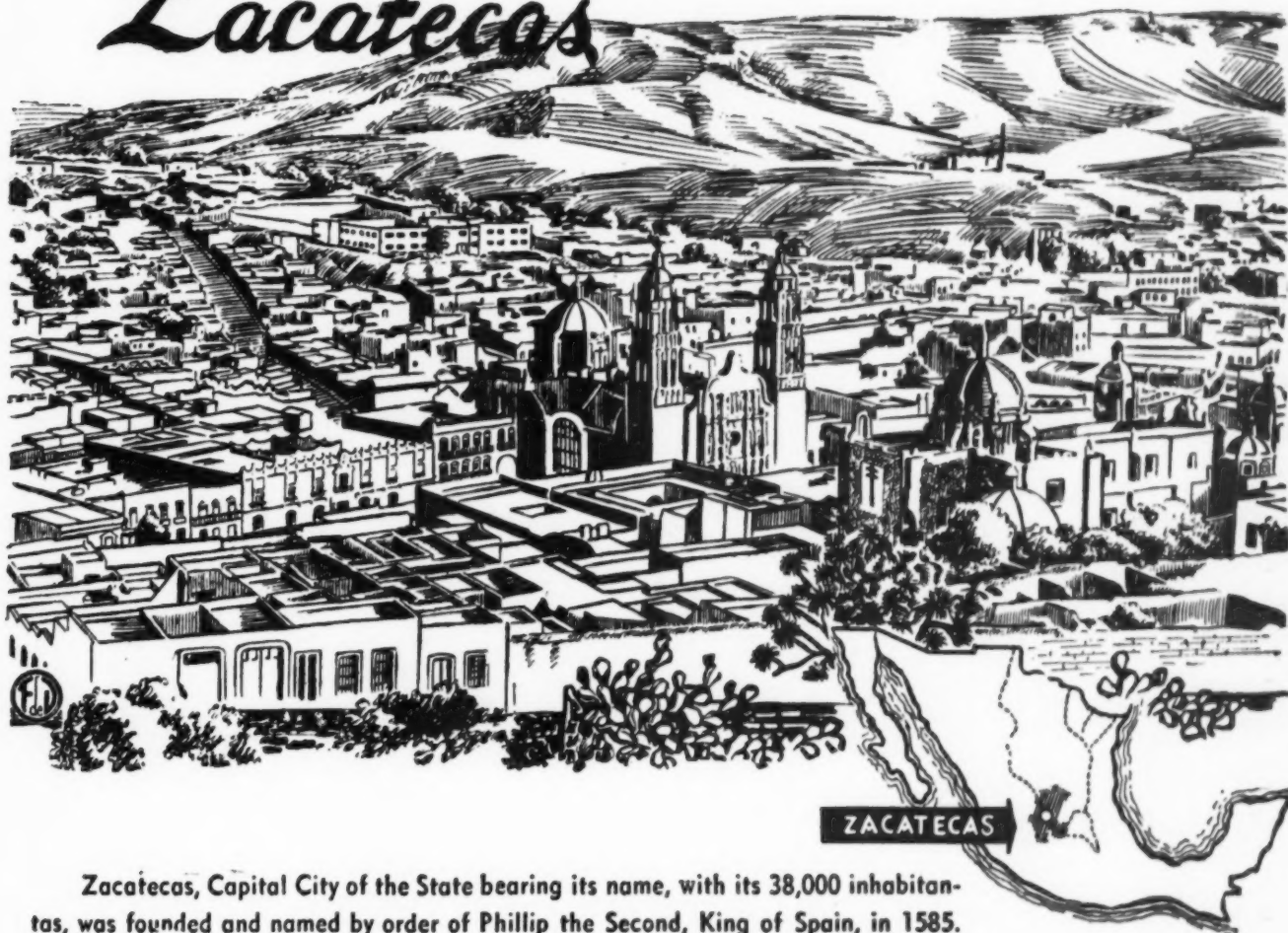
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HOWARD S. PHILLIPS

EDITOR

The Grijalva Project

THE extreme contrast in Mexico's climate and topography accounts for its incapacity, throughout its entire history, to achieve agricultural abundance, and thereby a state of common economic well-being. For while most of its territory lacks sufficient rainfall or fluvial waters that may be utilized for irrigation, there is at least one region—that of the state of Tabasco—where agricultural development has been gravely impeded because of too much water.

This region comprises in part the basin of the Grijalva river, or a potentially very rich agricultural area of more than five million hectares, an area which under proper exploitation could feed a considerable portion of Mexico's population and yield many products for highly profitable export.

The source of the Grijalva is in Guatemala, and it is formed by the confluence of numerous tributary streams. The chief products of this region are corn, cacao, banana, sugar cane, coffee, tobacco, pepper, vanilla, chicle-gum, a great variety of tropical fruits, and a long list of splendid cabinet and dye woods. And yet, despite its extremely prolific soil, this region has been exploited in the past upon a nominal and hazardous basis due to destructive floods and endemic disease. During the rainy seasons the Grijalva river flows over its banks, inundating many square miles of land, destroying the crops, endangering life, creating swamps and stagnant pools which breed malarial fever.

* * *

In the course of the foregone two decades, Mexico's governments, endeavouring to increase agricultural production so that it may cope with national needs, have built numerous irrigation systems throughout the arid sections of the country, thus adding several million hectares to its tillable area. And albeit the national crop has been increased considerably through this added acreage, this increase has been offset by the extremely rapid increase in population. Hence agricultural insufficiency is still the major problem confronted by Mexico.

For this reason, the government of Ruiz Cortines, while continuing the program of irrigation in barren regions, has turned its attention to such regions where agriculture is impaired by an excess of water, formulating a comprehensive program for the reclamation of the vast and fertile basin of the Grijalva river.

The project which is now being carried out in Tabasco has become feasible since the construction in recent years of the Pan-American Highway and the Sureste Railway, or the two major overland routes of communication which have freed the states of Tabasco, Chiapas, Campeche and Yucatan from their former isolation, linking them with the rest of the nation's territory.

The Grijalva project, formulated upon an integrated over-all plan, will result in a complete economic

and social transformation of the region. It includes the construction of additional interlinking highways and railways, as well as sea-ports, which will facilitate the shipment of local products, the building of dikes, levees and dams, the draining of flooded areas, the erection of electric power plants, the development of agriculture, cattle raising and local industries, and the creation of new communities through colonization.

Since the work of construction cannot be carried out successfully under the prevalent insalubrious conditions, the definitive eradication of malaria and other endemic diseases defines the initial phase of this vast undertaking. The entire ground is being covered step by step by well equipped sanitary brigades who are systematically eliminating the sources of disease.

Meanwhile a large force of workmen is engaged in building the first section of a dike and levee system which will extend along the banks of the Grijalva over a distance of forty kilometers. This system will put an end to the seasonal floods and control the current of the river directing it toward coastal lagoons and the sea. The immediate benefits of this system will ensue from the reclamation of some 700,000 hectares of excellent soil for agricultural purposes—a goal which the present government expects to achieve in the next five years. But the long-range benefits of this initial and following tasks are, in fact, beyond calculation.

Technicians are at present concluding the plans for dredging the river over a course of 500 kilometers, from the Guatemala border to the sea port of Frontera, Tabasco, in order to make it navigable. Another plan is being formulated, for the construction of canals which will connect the numerous lagoons strung out along the coast of Tabasco, extending the route of the Grijalva from the port of Frontera to Tonala on the border of the state of Veracruz, and thus provide the means of water transportation for numerous communities scattered through this region.

The various dams that are to be built at the upper margins of the Grijalva to further control its flow will be eventually utilized for generating electric power on a major scale, which will stimulate the industrial development of the region and provide a surplus for other parts of the country.

* * *

Throughout many years Mexico has almost entirely depended for its sustenance on the exploitation of its temperate zones, while the exuberantly fertile tropical regions have remained uncommunicated, undeveloped and thinly populated; these regions have been left behind as a vast, almost untouched and unexplored latent reserve of national wealth.

Today, driven by dire necessity, Mexico is finally turning its eyes to these opulent tierras calientes, seeking to find in the rich lands of Tabasco a source of new abundance and well-being.

White Collar Girl

By Sylvia Martin

THE bars that separate the banking public from the tellers are a nuisance. How shake hands through the grill? Sometimes Maria's fingers touch mine under the narrow opening meant only for passing notes and coins. Sometimes our hands, trying to meet through the bars, close on cold iron. More often Maria will open her little window for a fully satisfying good morning and again for our good-bye.

Three years ago Maria Castañeda, fresh from business school, applied for a job at the local branch of the National Bank of Mexico and was accepted. She saw nothing unusual in this. She had not realized until I told her that she was among the first women in Mexico to be employed as bank tellers. Now that things have begun to move, they are moving fast: that branch today employs five girls as cashiers and accountants—all of them young, pretty, and efficient.

Only a decade ago the white-collar girl was still a pioneer. There were stenographers, typists, filers, and department store clerks, but not many. A young woman of good family did not work. If she did not marry early, she lived out a sheltered and chaperoned spinsterhood. The change, significant of a nation developing from an agricultural to an industrial economy, has been so rapid, so casual, that it has scarcely been noticed.

But the day is not yet here when the white-collar girl can live alone or share an apartment with a girl friend. She may be the chief support of her family, but that does not buy independence. If she is no longer so rigidly chaperoned, she is still sheltered.

Maria lives with her genteelly poor mother and father in an apartment building—a dwelling as new to Mexico as she herself is to its society. Its stream-

lined modernism is tempered by jerry-built walls that flake plaster in the dry season and drip pieces of it in the wet, and by the fact that it stands on an outlying street off the market. On market days sellers of rope, mats, and baskets sit around its door.

Dressed as smartly as her North American counterpart, Maria on her way to work walks between piles of merchandise guarded by women from whom she is as far removed as any foreigner. Not for them are the lipsticked mouth, the short frock, the silk-clad legs. In their world a woman's body is swathed from the public eye by yards of cotton, and if a strange man looks too closely at an attractive face, there is always the rebozo to hide it. Maria, sometimes wearing sandals and carrying her good shoes in a paper parcel under her arm, walks through them unseeing, as secure in her world as if it had always been.

At the bank one morning, after our usual hand-clasp, I was so startled by Maria's appearance that I stared her into embarrassment. Unmistakably, she was wearing—a Tillett dress! Some years ago the Tillett brothers from England introduced fine textiles of designs so original that the eager demand of tourist and the foreign colony had sent their prices soaring. Maria earns fifty dollars a month. It is a good wage, but a thirty-dollar-a-week stenographer back home could no more afford to be clothed by Schiaparelli than Maria by Tillett.

"What a beautiful dress!" I managed to say at last.

And Maria blushed. She opened the little window and whispered, "The truth is Señora, that I have a sweetheart!"

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Water Color.

By Helen Young.



Mural Detail.

By Ryah Ludins.

The Villain Inflation

By Tomme Clark Call

MEXICO's industrialization program from the late 1930s to the present has been marked by a serious but controllable inflationary spiral that may be divided into four segments, defined by the relative influence of internal and external pressures:

1. Mexico's contemporary inflationary spiral began in 1936-7 with the Cardenas administration's deficit financing of public works and agricultural development. The first period was mainly of internal origin.

2. Mexican inflation intensified most rapidly during the World War II period, 1940-46. War conditions added heavy external inflationary causes to the internal pressures continued by the industrialization program of the Avila Camacho administration.

3. The inflationary spiral paused during the war's end reversed external factors toward deflationary tendencies, which were offset by the Aleman administration's calculated internal effect of renewed emphasis on the industrialization and public works programs.

4. The inflationary spiral began another upward surge in mid-1950 that continues to strain against applied controls. Internal inflationary pressures had leveled off, but the Korean war and world rearmament reapplied the external forces experienced in World War II.

A detailed analysis of Mexico's experience with inflation is essential to an understanding of its national economy policy, and to any appraisal to the probability of success in its current development program. Inflation is the storm warning on the barometer of economic stability and progress. Mexico has weathered the tempests so far, but not without hardships falling on the people least able to bear them. Unless relieved in time, those hardships may generate political unrest menacing to the economic development program that has become indispensable to achieving the aims of the Revolution. First, the effort should be made to take the measure of over-all inflation during the past decade.

* * *

Following the 1948 depreciation, the Mexican peso's dollar exchange rate of 4.85 was maintained until postwar conditions compelled devaluation. On July 22 1948, the peso was set free of artificial stabilization to seek its own level, and on 17 June 1949, a new parity rate was fixed at 8.65 pesos to the dollar. The peso's dollar value thus was cut nearly in half at a time when the dollar itself was going down to half or less its prewar real value. Roughly then, the postwar peso has only about a fourth of its prewar real purchasing power in the United States, which provides the bulk of Mexico's imports.

A common estimate in Mexico in 1951 was that purchasing power of the postwar peso in the domestic market also had fallen to about a fourth of its prewar real value. Various indices support that approximation sufficiently for the purposes of this general study.

Mexico's national income in peso terms multiplied about five times from 1939's 6 billion pesos to 1950's estimated 30 billions. Even allowing for the 30 per cent increase in population during that decade, a heavy degree of inflation is indicated by the fact that real per-capita income increased by only 23 per cent during the same period.

With 1939 as the base of 100, the peso value of manufacturing production by 1947 had climbed to 333.1, though the physical volume had increased to only 136. The Secretariat of the National Economy's index of prices of agricultural products, with 1929 as the base of 100, rose from 128 in 1939 to 406.9 in 1949. Similarly, its wholesale price index, with a 1929 base, went from 122.2 in 1939 to 309.5 in 1948. Such indices have renewed their upward climb during the period of fresh inflation from mid-1950 through 1951.

With telling impact, the price index of Mexican imports, with 1937 as 100, had reached 381.4 by 1950, the related durable consumer-goods imports price index stood at 604, capital goods at 428, and various soft goods—foodstuffs, sundries, textiles—at around 350. All such indices jumped again during the 1950-51 price inflation in the United States, the main source of imports.

Tannenbaum estimates that at the peak of the war-stimulated inflation, the cost of living in June 1946, was 412 per cent above the 1934 depression level. Mosk figured, in his industrialization study, that real wages in manufacturing rose only about 3 per cent from 1939 to 1940, and then declined steadily under war inflation to 18 per cent below the 1939 mark in 1944. The United Nations Economic Commissions for Latin America in 1951 reported that real wages in Mexican industry fell 27 per cent from 1939 to 1947; they recovered to 5 per cent over the 1947 level by 1949, only to begin dropping again through 1950 and 1951. That study also reported that the yearly increase in the money supply did not exceed an average of 100 million pesos before the war, but expanded in excess of 500 millions annually through 1945. Mexico's cost-of-living index (1939=100) stood at 417 in July 1951.

Those figures support a broad conclusion that the inflationary spiral beginning before, and running through and after, World War II has hit Mexico with perhaps twice the impact felt in the United States. Though internal economic policy aggravated the situation until recently, the excessive impact is largely due to the fact that the Mexican national economy is still far more sensitive to external pressures than that of the United States. With an adequate, if general, idea of the degree of inflation that has been experienced in Mexico, it is necessary now to review how the present situation came about and what is being done about it.

Until 1936, Mexican governmental finances were fairly well balanced, and public works were provided from tax income. In 1937, the Cardenas administration launched a large-scale program of public works through central bank financing that resulted in sharp monetary expansion. The Federal Government for several years subsequently borrowed from the Bank of Mexico in increasing amounts.

At the same time, the government began to support a broad program of agricultural credit through new, specialized banks, with additional monetary expansion. The oil-expropriation crisis, in March 1938, further aggravated inflationary forces, and the peso was devaluated from 3.60 to 4.85 to the dollar.

The Federal Government's deficit-spending and credit expansion, for an unprecedented (for Mexico) public works and agricultural development program, primarily accounted for the inflationary spiral to the beginning of World War II. This initial inflation, however, was not severe by the gauge of subsequent experience. The Mexico City wholesale-price index, for example, moved from 90.5 in 1935 (1929=100) to 122.8 in 1940.

With the beginning of World War II in late 1939, and the United States' rearmament program soon thereafter, external inflationary pressures came to add their force to the internal pressures which public policy there saw fit to maintain.

* * *

Throughout the war, the Mexican government, then embarked on its industrialization program, continued its inflationary policy of deficit-financing of public works and related economic development. Between 1939 and 1945, a budget deficit of more than 800,000,000 pesos accumulated, requiring issuance of Internal Funded Public Debt bonds and Treasury certificates. Without tax reform, the government's revenue rose in about the same proportion as national income, with import revenues falling to offset increasing export revenues. Meanwhile, expenditures climbed more rapidly with heavier outlays for education, agriculture, and communications.

Though the Bank of Mexico in 1940 began using reserve requirements increasingly to check overexpansion of credit, monetary expansion, nevertheless, ran well above a half a billion pesos annually through the war years. Metallic currency, at one time two-thirds of the money in circulation, had declined to 2 per cent by 1945; and, by the same year, bank deposits had become more than half the total money supply. Bank credits expanded despite countermoves, as the government's public works and industrialization program was pushed forward under wartime conditions.

The major Allies primarily the United States, called heavily on Mexico for exports of strategic raw materials, but could not meet Mexico's manufactured imports demand under the emergency conditions then prevailing. As a result, Mexico piled up between 1939 and 1945 a spectacular increase in monetary reserves of some 335 million dollars.

But the excess of exports over imports, although the major, was not the only factor increasing the supply of money and curtailing the supply of goods available during the war period. Tourist expenditures increased as North Americans, cut off from Europe and Asia, turned to Mexico. Wartime migrant workers in the United States sent home substantial dollar remittances. Domestic gold and silver production continued. 'Refugee capital' from Europe and 'flight capital' from the United States, along with repatriated Mexican capital, sought relative security in Mexico.

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Oil.

By Ione Robinson.

Day of the Saint

By Karena Shields

TOMASINO was not named after a saint. In the whole village of Tipitan he was the only one who did not have a saint's name or a saint's day.

His father waved his arms and shouted that there was no God, and that the church was a passel of lies. Tomasino was named after his father, who was, to be sure, named after a saint, but that did not give a saint's day to the little boy.

The people of Tipitan knew something else about Tomasino. He was, they said, not a child really, but a crow. His hair grew up peakedly, from a rather pointed cranium, and his thin face had a sharp little nose. His hands, with unusually long fingers, were surely like those of a bird. His mother had found him, they said, when she went to hoe the corn one day, and

had taken him to the witch doctor. Everyone in the village knew this to be true.

The little boys of Tipitan were not sure they could play with a boy who was really a crow, so they had told themselves that Santo Tomás was playing a joke on everyone, and that this child was really the saint's own son. Wasn't it fit, they asked, for Santo Tomás, who had been such a doubting one, to give a child to a man who doubted so? Their parents added to this thinking until everyone believed it also, and only his father laughed and declared it wasn't so.

Tomasino's father shouted whenever he thought about the churches. "During the big fight my horses were stabled in the cathedral," he boasted, his gold tooth shining in the firelight. "The cherubims and

seraphims carved in wood over the arch of the altar were good for target practice." He said this talk of saints and crows was nonsense and his son was just his son.

Tomasino's mother said nothing, but she pulled her black roboso down over her head until only her large quiet eyes looked out from its protection, and the smile around her mouth did not show. What she believed no one could say, but she did not hit at Tomasino with the back of her hand when he stole bits of the brown sugar candy she made into panuche to sell. She batted at all the others, and swept them out of the house none too gently with the broom handle, but Tomasino she did not seem to notice, with his fingers guilty and sticky, and his face smeared with the forbidden treasure.

No one complained that Tomasino was not punished for putting his fingers into the good candy when his mother's back was turned. After all, was it not enough that perhaps he was really a crow and not a boy after all?

It was strange how the whole village protectingly spread about Tomasino this belief that he was Santo Tomas' own child and at the same moment they considered him most assuredly a small crow. It never seemed necessary to reconcile the possibility of his being a saint's son and his crow-ness with the fact that he walked and talked and did the things a small boy might do. He was one and the other and the third all at the same time. For the people of Tipitan, perched as it was on the edge of dank jungle, anything was possible.

* * *

Tomasino's mother had to harbor the least crumb of sugar, and to keep carefully the smallest pullet egg, the most measly little rooster and even shriveled up corn husks, for each thing had an invaluable place in the living of her family. They were not poor. They just did not have many things for a life, and there were ten lives in the family to provide for. So it was always a problem when All Saints Day came to the town of Tipitan. Everyone saved something to lay at the feet of the Madonna on All Saints Day. One couldn't remember with gifts every saint, so it was simpler to make Her the receiver of respect and adoration for all their intentions.

The children talked about it for several weeks in advance. They even showed each other what they had saved to put on the cart at her feet when she lead the procession out of the church and around the town. Tomasino's brothers and sisters who went to school had saved something: a crayon, or a scrap of paper with a star on it. They were older than he, and had a different father. They could use their saint's names, for it was none of this father's affair. But Tomasino had nothing. How could he?

It was natural that Tomasino should brood about all this. He was not sure, as was no one else, if he was really more than all, or less by a crow's stature than anyone. It did not worry him, he just thought about it, and wondered whether as a crow, he should not take an even greater gift to the Madonna, or as a saint's own child he should instead just walk singing with the throng. It was hard to know. But the more he brooded on it, the more he decided that he could not assume anything but the humblest place, because after all, there was no halo about his head. (He had looked in the cracked mirror at the barber shop.) Besides, he left footprints in the muddy street just like everyone else. In fact, because his toes were so long, his footprints even looked more like that of a crow than a little boy. Tomasino thought about all

this much more than anyone else. The people of Tipitan were used to him by now.

There was nothing that Tomasino could give. He did not go to school, so could not save anything from his days there. He could not take anything that belonged to anyone else, because that would not be his gift but theirs, really. Then, a few days before the procession, he knew a thing he might do. True, it might take food out of their mouths, important food, and there was a question whether he should dare to make his brothers and sisters and mother a little hungrier, but in a way they would be sharing in the gift to the Madonna, and that would be better than food, wouldn't it? He decided that his gift was good, for many people would be in the giving of it, and whatever his origin, he must place something more than anyone at the Madonna's feet on All Saints Day.

Since at least part of him was really a crow, he could get along very well with the chickens that scratched anywhere and everywhere in the village. Each family had its own chickens that came home to roost in the house at night. There was no question about whose chickens they were, for they themselves made the decisions about home in the mystic way of creatures that are beyond the machinations of man's mind.

So Tomasino hunted out a hen that layed eggs often, and had a talk with her. He explained, as she sat one night in the corner of their hut, just why she must accommodate him, and ruffled the feathers under her breast with gentle fingers, and put his lips close to her tufted ears to tell her that the eggs, at least two of them, must be the gift to the Madonna. There would be two less chicks in the world, to be sure, but perhaps the Madonna would see the sacrifice and speak to Santo Tomás and help him, Tomasino, to understand better what to do with a life. The hen in turn, would be blessed, for she would be the beginning of the gift. The hen clucked her head down into her soft feathers, and Tomasino knew she understood.

Next day, in her special laying place, he found two eggs, both warm, as if freshly laid. These he took, and hid. His mother and his grandmother and his uncle all noticed that the hen did not lay an egg that day and talked of putting her in the pot, but they did nothing. That night Tomasino lay awake a long time, in terrible fright for fear he had caused the hen to lose her life. Perhaps he should put the eggs back! He finally stole to the hen, crouched as she was in her corner, and leaned his face softly against her, in a silent promise to protect her somehow.

* * *

The procession on All Saints Day was a tremendous one for Tipitan. Tomasino's family all walked in it. All but his father. He was one of the constables, and should have been there to keep the peace, but he appointed someone else in his place and took some hides to sell to the town in the valley. He made a great point of leaving Tipitan at dawn so as not to witness the people loing their heads over a silly statue. He wanted to be sure Tomasino did not go to the procession, and gave the boy four pairs of boots to clean. "No son of mine!" he said loudly. In fact, it had been a struggle to keep from being taken to the village in the valley and missing the celebration altogether! But Tomasino had managed to get a sore foot and his mother had spoken for him.

The procession started from the church and began a turn about the town plaza. Tomasino was still polishing boots.

The bells rang out over the tile and thatched roofs
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Dolls of Puebla

By Dorothea Deans

IN the city of Puebla, an old lady, tiny as a child, comes regularly to the hotels with a basket of home-made dolls to sell. The figures, which are four or five inches in height, are finely proportioned, and, besides being exquisitely fashioned, each possesses personality to a remarkable degree. Though the supply seems inexhaustible and no two are alike, each is as individual as a real person; no, more so, because, in the dolls, the mood has been heightened until they are like people off some infinitesimal stage. They are persons caught in the act. They are actors enamoured of their high moment, but the curtain has stuck and will not ring down upon them. They are puppets with taut strings.

The old lady is proud of the drama of her dolls. The other morning she arrived early at the Hotel Colonial with her basket and for the benefit of some tourists arranged its contents—twenty-five dolls in all—the length of the showcase in the silver shop. With the electric bulbs in the case serving as footlights, the tiny people stood out in all their eloquent gestures like performers assembled for the grand finale.

The ingenue of the cast was a young girl in a pink rayon lace gown, holding a fragment of mirror in one hand and in the act of powdering her nose with the other. A full-chested, arrogant cook with an 'olla' in her hand and a 'criada' brandishing a broom were good for comedy. A native woman with a market basket was harried by a dog at her feet barking for meat. A girl with downcast eyes carried candles for the church altar. An elderly Spanish dame wore all black and her street costume was complete with leather purse and umbrella, while, beneath her white hair, peeped black earrings. A glamor girl—no doubt the other woman in the plot—swung a fur jacket on her hip. A beggar knelt in patched trousers, his white hair dishevelled as if in the act of swinging off the hat he held in one hand, the other outstretched for alms.

There were peons with muscles bulging under their 'sarapes' and carrying baskets of eggs and cheese. But many of the dolls were sophisticated figures, grand ladies and gentlemen, such as once peopled Mexico's most Spanish city, with noses embroidered high on their faces. And, though scarcely as large as a thumbnail, the faces held expression like portraits. A swaggering musician with guitar under his arm and jauger on his flaring face might be Arturo de Cordova, cast as a 'mariachi.'

But the old lady is perhaps the strangest and most exquisite figure of all, and she never stops talking. Immaculately clean and neat from the black shawl over her head to her little buttoned shoes, she has a role just as surely as one of her dolls. She epitomizes the ancient and eternal female, shrunken, withered like a dried fruit, yet still softly tinted; indestructible, proud, but beyond any caring; possessionless, yet commanding like a monarch. Her voice is amazingly strong



Water Color.

My Miguel Covarrubias.

and deep, while the sunken, toothless mouth has lent itself to laughter so long that the lips in their brief moments of repose seem clamped upon a joke, which she would savor over and over again and eventually die from laughing at. Her eyes are large and nobly formed, blue and sweet and wise.

* * *

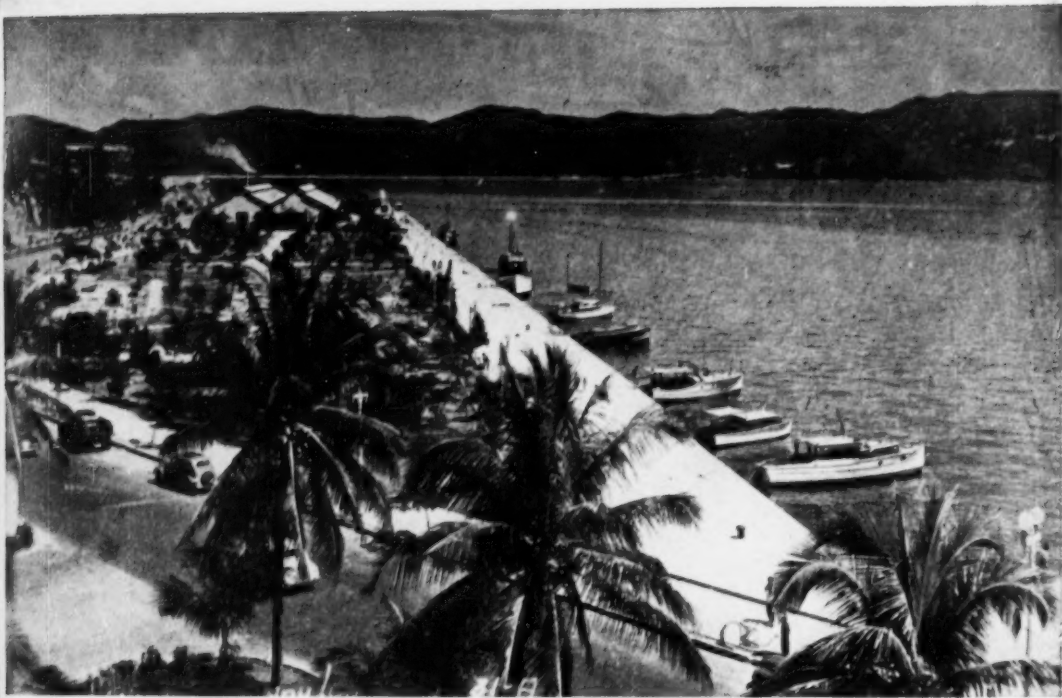
She once was a great artist in making the dolls, she explains. She won prizes with her skill and some of her creations are on permanent exhibition in the museum in Mexico City. Now fading sight will not permit her to make any more of the little people. Her room is filled with them, she says, but she is so old now that she must leave them soon. Like a parent, who would see her children absorbed in new family groups before they part, she is breaking up her collection and offering the dolls for sale, a few at a time. She must have the money, too, she admits to the saleslady at the silver shop, who has come to regard the old lady with affection and concern. She has a little bit of money, which, with an occasional few pesos from the dolls permits her to get along.

"What will you do when the dolls are all gone?" the friend asks.

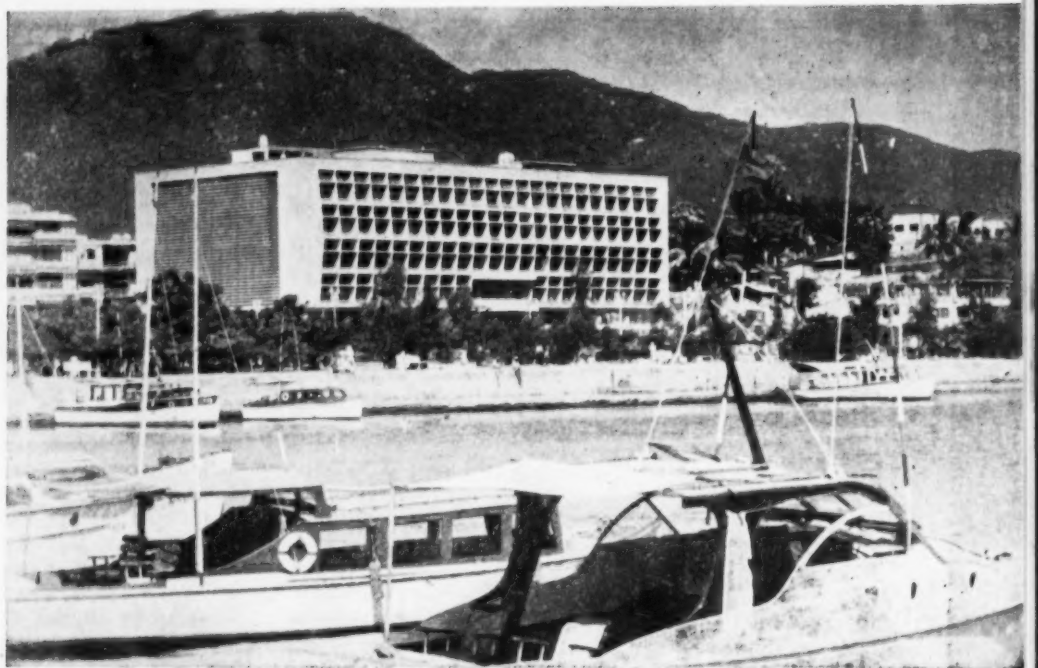
"Oh! I don't think I will live that long," she answers in dismay at the thought.

While her voice is strong and her mind forceful, the old lady walks painfully and stiffly with a cane. It takes her a long time to get underway—poised on her twisted feet, let alone to put them in motion. Her whole brittle figure under its wrappings seems only one degree from rigor mortis. In her tremulous clasp, the dolls, already faintly battered and faded, suffer sometimes as straw hats and baskets become interchanged, bags and bottles fall, a 'casuela' gets chip-

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Along the wharf in Acapulco.



One of the ultra modern structures facing the wharf.



The Lure of Acapulco

By Tony Perez

OF ALL the many resorts in Mexico, Acapulco, now famed the world over, is the first choice of the visitor from abroad. In less than one hour, by Aeronaves de Mexico luxury passenger planes, or in eight hours by motor over a splendid scenic highway, the visitor is out of the 7,500-foot altitude of the Mexican capital and shedding his clothes like mad, as the plane lands on a sparkling white runway on the beach of the blue Pacific Ocean—with waving coconut palms and an azure fresh water lagoon on the other side.

A blast of oven-hot air fans his face as he drives into town in a taxi along a paved, high-speed highway which skirts the Pacific and offers vistas that cause the camera fan to stop the car many times en route.

Arriving in downtown Acapulco, the visitor finds the natives wearing cotton tropical clothes as they go about their work. The heat, however, instead of being oppressive, is invigorating. He stops for a cool drink or a bite to eat at an open-air sidewalk cafe, and watches the swirl of activity around him—the old Cathedral, the tree-filled plaza, the native musicians playing under the trees...

Then he continues to his hotel, and as likely as not, gasps at the ultra-modern building, the profusion of flowers and tropical plants, and the extremely good taste of decoration and accommodations of his room or suite. From the window or terrace he catches his first close glimpse of Acapulco Bay, as blue as the Mediterranean or Lake Tahoe, rimmed by verdant green hills dotted with modern white houses with red tiled roofs. It is a view rarely matched for beauty and vividness of color.

Swimming, sunbathing, water-skiing, deep-sea fishing, duck hunting, exploring the jungles, gathering shrimp (in the lagoon of Coyuea) and fresh water fishing, to say nothing of just plain "being lazy," are Acapulco's contributions to tired, bored and fed-up-with-life visitors. One day flows into another with a smooth, uninterrupted rhythm... and when the tourist returns home, he finds himself dreaming of the tropical paradise of Acapulco.



La Quebrada.

Panoramic view of the city and bay of Acapulco.

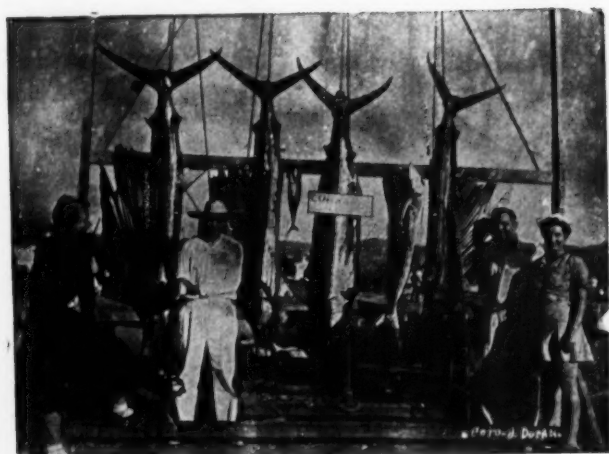




Buildings high on cliffs along the bay.



At Pie de la Cuesta.



Proud fishermen and their trophies.

A New Yorker Returns

By Camille Mirepoix

I WAS walking down the road in Acapulco—
down a new sweeping highway
stretching for miles between the mountains and the sea—
and a rare, long-unknown feeling was within me,
a feeling of being at home.

The echo of treasure-laden galleons,
of buccaneer days and ways, did not resound on these shores
amid the gladioli and Michaelmas daisies
dazzling in the soft glow of arclights
strung out like beads along the road.

The twilight falling from the mountains
engulfed these tropic sands
and cast slanting shadows in the sky
and over the sparkling distant harbour.

I had walked down a lonely street in New York
and felt afraid and forsaken.
But here, walking alone near the sea,
beneath the heavens and the high hills,
there was a feeling in me of belonging, akin to joy.

The blood of Mexico does not flow in my veins,
but in my heart I knew that this too was my place—
that this too was my Acapulco.

A day's catch.



The Hornos Beach at Acapulco.

At the Revolcadero Beach.



Patterns of an Old City

EMBERS IN THE ASHES

By Howard S. Phillip

OLIVARES scanned the menú without much curiosity or relish. It was a list of the same unappetizing daily fare, a re-enumeration of the same uninviting nutriment, the same insipid grub he was compelled, or rather compelled himself, to consume each day in one of the noisy and crowded downtown restaurants. He was slow in making his choice, and then, after he gave his order to the waitress, immediately changed his mind and ordered something else.

He folded and propped the newspaper in front of his plate, making an effort to become absorbed in some item, and thereby to be able to eat automatically, without actually savouring the depressingly tasteless food. But his eyes found nothing arresting in the news, nothing to completely detach his mind from its cheerless course, and he read on, as he ate, automatically, without actual awareness.

It has been almost two years since he stopped going home for his midday meal, and yet he could not grow accustomed to restaurant food or to eating alone; it never ceased being an ordeal, a melancholy interval when his sense of essential homelessness, of his being an outcast, the realization of the deplorable squalor whereto his life had descended, became a veritable torment. During the rest of the day, as he went about his business, he yet managed to partly forget, or at least to conceal, his unhappiness. Selling second-hand automobiles on commission was a task which required wits and self-possession and an air of optimism: a man had to convey the impression of being cheerful and amiable, and this, impelled by force of habit, Olivares to a certain extent was yet able to do. Having, moreover, dedicated himself to this business for many years, he knew its ins and outs; he knew how to trace a valid prospect, how to anticipate the prospect's preference, how to make each offering seem an authentic bargain, and how, without apparent eagerness or pressure, to close a sale.

Withal, however, he was not a brilliant performer. He was, in fact, only mildly ambitious and not very industrious; he seldom overexerted himself, and yet the efficiency acquired through many years of experience assured him of moderate success. The task of selling had not been his initial purpose in life. He drifted into it in his youth, after two years at law school, when at his father's death he was compelled to abandon his studies in order to earn a living. Prior to automobiles he had tried his hand at sundry other lines—life insurance, encyclopaedias, cash registers—gradually gathering the aptitude required by his calling.

When he was younger he was inclined to regard his ability to earn his bread in this apparently unstable and precarious fashion as something of a superior achievement. He prized his independence, his freedom from a fixed or confining routine, and pursued his task with zest, as a kind of daily adventure, as an exciting game of chance. Almost anyone, he reasoned, could get along sitting at a desk or standing behind a counter, providing, of course, he had the cash to invest in some enterprise; but not everybody could wrest a steady income "out on the street" by the sole means of convincing conversation.

With the passing of years, however, as he reached middle age, he was no longer so very sure about it: gradually he commenced to doubt this theory, regret-

ting that he had somehow never been able to save up a sufficient amount of capital to engage in some less hazardous sort of business. A man on the street, he surmised, was actually a man without a roof over his head. And it was during the years of growing doubt, of an increasing feeling of insecurity, that in his dissatisfaction with himself he began to harbor a resentment against his wife, an utterly unreasonable resentment stemming from a sense of incompleteness, from a feeling of unrewarded bondage and irreparable default.

He never doubted that Elena was a good wife, probably a much better wife than he deserved, and yet he felt that in some way she was to blame for his unfulfillment. A marriage, as well as life itself, must in one way or another represent accretion, enrichment, the normal fulfillment of growth, while theirs had been fruitless, empty and static. Gradually, from year to year, despite Elena's forbearance and devotion, despite her helpless, slavish loyalty, their life became desolate and barren, their companionship devoid of a sustaining common interest or purpose. Hence there was slight incentive behind his work. Lacking by nature the urge for material acquisition, indifferent to Elena's needs or cravings, Olivares merely drifted along, satisfied with nominal earnings that provided for nominal needs.

At the outset of their estrangement Olivares treated his wife with outspoken hostility. Her docility and eagerness to gratify provoked ill temper, abuse and recriminations; but with time this overt antagonism degenerated into apathy and morose resignation. He still went home for his midday meal; but presently, likely because he knew that she cooked well and tried her best to please him, and that to this extent he was yet dependent upon her, he commenced to stay away periodically under the pretext of business, and finally withdrew altogether, going home at night, and at unpredictable hours, to sleep by himself on a folding couch in the living room.

* * *

He took a sip from the cup of unsavoury black coffee and lit a cigarette, thinking that it was yet too early for the unpromising appointment he had pending during the afternoon, and that the man would most likely fail to keep it anyway, wondering dolefully how he might kill the intervening time. He surmised that it would soon start raining, and that even if he were lucky enough to see the man, it would be hardly a propitious time to convincingly demonstrate the car he hoped to sell him.

He wondered if it would also rain this afternoon in Guadalajara, and then, with a sharpness as acute as physical pain he recalled the days when he welcomed such rainy afternoons, the joyous, oblivious afternoons with Graciela—the hours of blissful refuge, of ardent abandon, of a mysterious reborn avidity a man, despite his tardy years, may yet miraculously grasp from existence—and the torment he constantly sought to suppress returned with multiplied force, and once again despair opened before him like an yawning pit.

They are gone, he thought. They have been gone five weeks, but the dead emptiness they have left

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Oil.

By Ron Chapman.

Ride to Sinaloa

By John W. Hilton

ON MY first trip into Sonora, I had ridden the trail south to the Sinaloa border; but I was in a hurry and there were a great many points along the trail that I wished to stop and see, but time would not permit.

Now we were on the ranch for the entire summer, and time was the one thing that we had plenty of. The final excuse for going on the old trail came, one day, when I remembered a rare night-blooming cereus cluster that I had passed that first early morning. I had been reading up on this genus of cactus, since, and was convinced that this was a new species. We decided to make a day of collecting. The next morning we started off to the south—Eunice, my son Philip, and myself—followed by Chico, one of the ranch mozos, and a pack mule with two gasoline crates, to carry back cactus specimens.

The first little village south was Caliente, named after its fine hot springs, which gushed full-fledged from a round hole in the volcanic rock. The women of the village were busily washing clothes and told us how very fortunate they were to have hot water, where most of their sisters had to do all their washings in a "cold stream." Then, too, it made for a great deal more cleanliness than most villages could boast. Here, it was possible to bathe in comfort the year around. The water was almost boiling, where it emerged, and cooled as it traveled from pool to pool to the arroyo below. The bather or washer could choose the temperature best suited to the mood or the weather.

We were just about to leave the friendly little village when a boy came up with two little spotted fawns. They were the most graceful and beautifully marked animals we had ever seen in Sonora. Philip fell in love with them at first sight and wanted to

buy them both. The boy wanted only a peso a piece. It took a great deal to argue him (and secretly myself) into understanding that the Hilton family did not have any place in its pattern for two pet Sonoran brush buck, no matter how charming. I don't know which of our party was saddest as we watched the small boy, standing there behind us with the two pet deer. Even the fawns looked a little forlorn, and the disappointment of the small boy was apparent in every feature of his round little face.

Out of Caliente about a mile, we came upon the cactus fence that had astounded me on my first trip. The rock fences of the region are common and sometimes run for many miles without a break, but this fence was different. It bordered one side of the trail, up one hill and down the other, with a collection of plants that would have been the envy of any botanic garden in the world. The ranchers had simply planted six-or seven-foot cuttings of whatever cereus type was growing nearest, and they had taken root to form a solid growing wall. On some stretches hundreds of feet were fenced with the rare *Cephalocereus leuccephalus*. The natives call it "pitaya barbona," or bearded pitaya, because the southwest side of each stem is covered with a white mass of vegetable wool, about six inches long. It is through this wool that the flowers and fruits form. Some botanists explain this odd hair on certain cactus as a natural protection against creeping insects, such as ants and beetles, that would otherwise destroy the flowers before they could mature fruits. I doubt if there are more than three hundred specimens of this plant in cultivation, outside of its native area; yet, here, we were riding past thousands of them, much larger and finer than any ever brought to a botanic garden.

The cactus finally gave way to a rock fence. It is hard to visualize, even when you gaze upon them, how many man-hours it took in the early days to erect these mortarless stone fences around the great haciendas. It was done by semi-slave labor for the early conquistadores. They had three reasons: one, to mark the land; another, to clear it; and a third, to apply the early Spaniards' feeling that the harder the Indians were made to work, the less trouble they would give the newcomers.

* * *

Chico was an excellent guide. He knew all the fruit trees and plants along the trail; what they were good for, and the Mexican and Indian names. At one point on the trail he led us up a side canyon to a giant figs tree of a species that we had not seen. A flock of green parrots flew up with such loud shrieking that we could hardly hear each other talk. They were attracted by the small fruits. Chico assured us that these fruits were wonderful. They were hard to get, for the parrots had been there first; but finally he secured some, by climbing an adjacent tree and reaching into the low overhanging branches. The fruits were almost black, and a little smaller than an English walnut. The texture and flavor were a little disappointing, but we ate our share, just the same, for Chico had gone to a great deal of trouble to get them for us. They were a little drier and tougher than a cultivated fig, with a pungent flavor that might be very good after an appetite had been cultivated for it.

The tree itself was worth walking many times the distance to see. Its great trunk looked like a thousand braided and twisted ropes that had finally grown together. Here and there a mass of roots touched the ground from a large overhanging branch and formed additional supporting trunks, like a banyan tree.

In the shade below it, on the rocky banks of the little canyon, was a collection of ferns and orchids that would have stopped traffic in front of any florist's window in the United States. In one of the trees, nearby, was a cluster of small sweet-scented orchids, that one could smell fifty feet away. They were bright yellow, about the size of a quarter, with brownish black pencilings. The odor resembled vanilla—with a touch of something else that I find no words to describe.

The little stream at the bottom of the canyon was only about a foot wide, but we saw three different species of small fishes swimming about. An aquarist could add some rather attractive new varieties to his collection, in this country. Most of the fishes were small and used to close quarters. They would adapt themselves to aquarium culture, readily. One species was particularly interesting at this spot. The males were only about three-quarters of an inch long, and a third of this was tail. They were jet black, with iridescent blue on the edges of the tails and fins. The females that they were courting were at least two inches long, with short fins and tails. They were the color of mother-of-pearl, with tiny black or brown specks, irregularly, scattered over the upper parts of their bodies. If it had not been the mating season, I am sure we would never have recognized the fact that they belonged to the same species. Like many of the small Sonoran fishes, they are live bearers, giving birth to a litter of from a dozen to fifty small, perfectly formed fishes which arrive in pairs over a period of several hours.

Brilliant long-tailed jays flew ahead of us for miles, shrieking a warning to all other wild life that man was on the move. We did not see a single deer and hardly any birds after these fellows started escorting us, but their antics were worth the loss. They would keep just ahead of us, flitting from tree to tree with long tails undulating behind, like something that

has been artificially attached. The tails of the males were fully one and a half times as long as the bodies. When they lit for a moment on a branch, they were just as likely to hold on upside down as right side up, and swing back and forth on the limb like circus performers on a trapeze. It seemed they were trying to do everything in their power to entertain and distract us while they kept up a lusty shrieking, to warn all the other denizens of the thorn forest that we were approaching.

Finally, the wash widened and we smelled wood smoke and the odors of cooking ahead. We emerged from the trees into a small village, surrounded by fields of waving corn. Everyone was friendly to us while Chico passed on all of the local news:

"Ah, there, Rosa, your sister at Guirocoba had her baby last night. It was a big strong boy. A rider from Alamos says that the corn to the north is poor because of light rain, so the price will be up this fall. Tell Maria that her father has the paludismo, and the fever is very nigh. José's cow had twin calves, both spotted. The small son of Pablo Rey, at Agua Caliente, fell from an uvalama tree, and broke his arm. Word comes from Joaquín Hernández in Alamos, that he will pay four pesos for good ocelot hides."

Here, before our eyes, we had an example of the "brush telegraph" in operation. In such a manner our own forefathers disseminated the vital news in the wilderness. It was like turning back time a hundred years.

Green corn was not yet in, and the old corn from last year was used up, so the village was living largely on the wild things that could be gathered. A species of pigweed, called "calites," made up a great deal of their diet, with what few wild roots they could dig, and game that could be trapped or shot, if they should be fortunate enough to have a little ammunition. This time of year is usually rather "triste" for the back-country folks; such food does not take the place of good solid tortillas and beans. Especially, small children are stricken with violent diarrhea which is often fatal. When the corn crop does come in triste or sad times will all be forgotten. Instead of laying by plenty, to carry the family through till next harvest, most of them will sell more than they should, in Alamos, and spend the money on a fiesta.

From the village on, we rode through a veritable hower of flowers. The ground was carpeted with millions of bright yellow cosmos. Almost every bush and tree bore either flowers of its own or vines that were a riot of bloom. Vines of the "antigonon" or queen's wreath, covered giant trees with their masses of cerise blossoms. I have seen this plant in cultivation in Hawaii and California, but here it ran riot, making masses of color that almost hurt your eyes. Chico gathered flowers and decorated the horses' bridles; even the sad-looking mule was suddenly glamorized with a colorful corsage. We were practically a parade, as we rode through the next settlement and stopped off long enough for Chico to relay and receive all of the current vital statistics.

* * *

Finally we saw the promontory ahead that marks the Sinaloa border, and soon we were resting under the shade of flowering trees, beside running water. I climbed the side hill to see if the cluster of rare *Acanthocereus* was still there, while Eunice got out our lunch. The cacti were still there, just as I had first seen them, years before. They were totally different from any others in the area, and I set about making cuttings, to take back on the burro.

After lunch, Chico started back with the burro.

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The Prodigal

Daughter

By Kim Schee

WHY don't you tell me the story of your great-aunt?" I said to Don Eduardo, who used to own one of the oldest haciendas in the State of Guerrero and who still was passionately fond of Spanish sherry and telling stories.

"With the greatest of pleasures I will tell you the story, Señor," said Don Eduardo peering wistfully into his empty glass.

"Moises," I called to the waiter, "another Amon-tillado for Don Eduardo." After Moises had filled Don Eduardo's glass he promptly began his story.

"Señor, my great-aunt Gloria Mercedes Mazon de la Peña was really an extraordinary woman. She was a Tapatia from Guadalajara and as beautiful as any flower. She had green eyes, hair like old gold, and ivory-colored skin, and in addition to all these charms she had an enchanting voice. At the age of eighteen Gloria left Guadalajara and went to Mexico City, not because of what you think, but because she was bored with her family, who, in spite of their noble traditions, were extremely bourgeois and conventional, and with her family's friends, who were just as stuffy. Of course, her departure created an unprecedented scandal in Guadalajara. Never before had such a thing happened in the long history of the Mazon de la Peña family. Gloria, needless to say, was quickly and permanently disinherited. Henceforth her name was never mentioned by any member of the Mazon de la Peña family. As far as they were concerned Gloria had never been born.

"Now most young women who arrive in Mexico City with little money and no friends undergo many hardships and much suffering, but it was not so with Gloria. Long before she had spent her last peso she



Wax Sculpture.

By Luis Hidalgo.

persuaded the patron of the city's most popular café to employ her and her illustrious name as a singer. Three months later she was not only adjudged the most popular entertainer in Mexico City, but she was the most sought-after woman as well. Politicos, generals, rich hacendados, and even men of the street groveled at her feet and showered her with costly presents. But Gloria never really had any feeling for them. She did, however, fall briefly in love with a poet and later with a violinist, but it appears that neither of these poor young men was sufficiently endowed to occupy her interest over any period of time.

"After a few years Gloria grew weary of Mexico City. It had nothing to offer her in the way of glamour and material advancement, so she decided to go to Europe. The fact that she hadn't saved one centavo didn't stand in the way of her plans. She immediately coquetted with a general, promised to be his mistress for a stipulated sum of money paid in advance, and on the night of their first assignation left the general in the lurch and went to Vera Cruz. It was said that the poor general, who was fat and tempestuous, suffered from high blood pressure and had an apoplectic stroke that very same night. Whether it was caused through anticipation or avarice no one could ascertain for he never regained his power of speech again and died several weeks later, leaving a devout wife and nine children to mourn him.

"In Europe Gloria's success was instantaneous. She sang in the most exclusive cafés and music halls from Constantinople to London. Her canciones típicas became the rage in every country she visited, and her exotic beauty turned the usual number of heads. The newspapers of the day wrote fabulous stories about

her life in Mexico, stressing always that she was the daughter of one the richest and most aristocratic families in Mexico. But Gloria soon grew weary of adulation. These nuisances, as she called the men who were endlessly about her, were no longer amusing. What she wanted, she decided, was love, simplicity of living, and, above all, complete obscurity. This new phase in her life, however, was not entirely original. Gloria had been greatly moved by Sarah Bernhardt's performance in *La Dame aux Camellias*, and it suddenly dawned on her that the glamorous life she had been leading was artificial and unworthy of her and would ultimately lead to destruction just as it had been in Camille's case. So for a brief interlude Gloria played the part of Camille, and like her she found Armand, and with well-intentioned renunciation of all worldly pleasures she retired to a simple cottage in Normandy.

"This interlude, however, was very brief and disastrous, for after three hectic months Gloria was back in Paris again, singing in a café, and her beloved Armand was only a bitter memory. The monotony of domestic chores, rural solitude, and the usual lovers' quarrels quickly palled on Gloria, and from then on she always referred to *La Dame aux Camellias* as *pura caca*, a phrase which I hope the French never troubled to translate.

"During the next five years Gloria spent most of her time in Paris. Her popularity as a singer, however, began to wane. Engagements became fewer and fewer until Gloria found herself in straitened circumstances, and even though men were still at her beck and call she had lost the knack of using them to her advantage. For the first time in her life Gloria could find no solution for her problems, so, like a good Catholic, she began to pray.

"Not long afterward Gloria began to suffer from strange pains in the region of her stomach. She went to her doctor, and after an examination he told her that she had gallstones and that she must be operated on as soon as possible. Instinctively Gloria knew that the operation was a serious one, and this she felt was an answer to her prayers. God had found a solution. But if she was going to die she must die in the grand manner as she had lived, so she set about to plan her death as she planned her life. With admirable coolness of mind she arranged for the best surgeon in Paris to perform the operation. She then chose the most luxurious room in the most exclusive hospital and ordered the room refurnished and filled with the rarest and most expensive flowers for her occupancy.

* * *

"A few days later when she was already a patient at the hospital she called the director to her room and had a long chat with him. She began by telling him that in case she did not survive the operation she want-

ed to make out a will leaving to the hospital all her property and haciendas which she had inherited from her famous family in Mexico. This she casually estimated would be worth in the neighborhood of several million pesos, perhaps more. In return all she asked was a contract signed by the hospital executive guaranteeing her an elaborate funeral which must include an especially fine casket, an exclusive cemetery, and a marble shrine. The director, of course, was dumfounded. Never before had such a request been made. At the same time he had a good business head, and he had heard too much about Gloria's rich family in Mexico not to be impressed. Treading lightly he tried to reassure Gloria in his best professional manner that she would most certainly survive the operation and that such arrangements were unnecessary. But Gloria insisted until the director yielded and assured her that he would have his lawyer draw up a will and make out a contract that very day for her signature. The same evening she signed the will in the presence of witnesses.

"Gloria's gallstone operation proved fatal. She died very peacefully under the anaesthetic. The surgeon who performed the operation was downcast. He had previously assured the director that Gloria would survive the operation. She was, he claimed, a medical phenomenon. The director, being a practical man and an honest man, was rightfully elated. Through his good judgment the hospital would fall heir to a vast fortune from which he himself would sooner or later profit, so he saw to it that Gloria's contract was religiously fulfilled. He employed the most expensive undertakers; he purchased the finest casket; he obtained the best plot of ground in the most expensive cemetery; he ordered a shrine to be erected over her grave evaluated at 20,000 francs; he even bought quantities of the most expensive flowers and had her obituaries in every important newspaper in Paris. As a result hundreds of curious people attended Gloria's funeral.

"The first letters the director dispatched to the alleged executives of Gloria's estates were never answered. After sending several more the director became alarmed and sent his lawyer in person to Mexico to settle the estate. The lawyer, of course, did not find the property and haciendas mentioned in Gloria's will. As a matter of fact he found nothing of importance to take to his client save a copy of an affidavit from Gloria's father stating that she had been legally disinherited at the age of eighteen.

"Y ya, Señor, that is is the story of my great-aunt, and a very extraordinary woman."

"And what happened to the hospital director?" I asked sadly.

"I really don't know, Señor," said Don Eduardo. "I only hope he didn't have an apopleptic stroke like the general. It is certain that he lost a small fortune and all faith in womankind."





Water Color.

By Roberto de la Cueva.

Mr. Humpel and Lady Connemara

By Dene Chandos

ON MY way home from Doña Chabela I met Avelino. He is tall, thin, melancholy looking, and, stiff and starched though he looks, he dances the jarabe tapatio beautifully with Tiburecia, the wishwoman. I don't think I have ever seen him smile. He owns various little patches of land, he makes bricks, and he is always immaculately dressed in the old Indio way, with clean white pajamas, ironed into the proper small squares, a dull blue sash and huaraches. Some time before he had come to ask me if I didn't want to buy a plot of his land, which lay outside Ajijic toward Chapala. I had been to see it. It had a good lake frontage and commanded the whole wide view, and the morning I was there a score of white herons, as graceful as fans and as unpleasant to one another as human beings, were fishing along its edge. It had a few trees around the sides but was otherwise quite bare. Eventually I had decided to buy it. Of course, there were the usual complications. In the first place, a strip of the land belonged to somebody else, from whom I had to buy it by separate treaty. Then it was found that Avelino had raised a mortgage on it, and the holder of the mortgage had to be dealt with. And after all that it turned out that the deeds were not in the name of Avelino at all but of his daughter. I had just received from my lawyer the papers she had to sign.

"How not," said Avelino when I explained to him. "I take the little papers and bring them all in order the day you indicate."

We agreed on a day for me to take him to Guadalupe so that the whole transaction might be completed

"When you pay me the centavos," he said, "I am going to put new bamboos under my roof of tiles, and buy another cow, and make a little excursion of eight days to the capital, because I have never seen it."

I went on to my house. After Doña Chabela's bear garden, the patio was a pool of peace. The accustomed sounds—Candelaria's distant monotone, the Professor's typewriter, the rhythmic cracking from a corner when Tippet was having an illicit bone—were the merest murmurs. At the door of my room Nieves was waiting for me, looking rather apprehensive.

"Come, señor," she said, and led the way onto the terrace.

There is a niche in the back wall of my terrace, fitted with shelves, which we use as a parking place for all the oddments that accumulate—pruning shears, packets of cigarettes of uncertain ownership, odd pencils, magazines, and so on. All these things were stacked on a table, and the shelves were full of plaques of Our Lady of Guadalupe, brightly painted and gilded. I found that they all had price tags on the back.

"That señora from Chapala, the one they say is a duchess or a countess, did it," said Nieves brightly. "Can you give me some lamb's wool?"

"What ever for?"

"My mother has a hemorrhage of the nose, and nothing will stop it, not cold bandages or alcohol bandages or anything, and they say she should breathe the smoke of burning lamb's wool. I've seen some inside those little shoes of soft leather, pues, that you wear in your bedroom."

Rather grudgingly I snipped a small part of the lining out of one of my bedroom slippers and gave it

to Nieves. Then I gathered all the plaques into a basket, and in the evening I took them down to Rendel's in Chapala. As usual a party was going on. Rendel himself was painting, but on the terrace one big group of people was playing noisy gin rummy, several more were listening to the radio, Edwina Schwert was sitting on the edge of the lily pond, dabbling her toes in the water and singing in German, and everybody was drinking. I couldn't see Lady Connemara.

"Denise? She's gone out to get something in the plaza," boomed Rendel from behind his easel and was detached by a wave from Martha Inchbold, who already had a gaggle of young men in tow.

I waited, looking out over the brilliant garden. The water lilies close at midday, and the pond was studded with piled green pads, but on each side the cannaes shone pink and scarlet and yellow and orange. Daylight was going, and they shone with deeper and deeper tones. I found Rendel again.

"Denise? She's in the bath," he boomed and was beckoned over once more by Martha.

Nadeen Braze, with her pile of red hair beginning to slip its moorings, tried to rope me into a little talk about Chirico, which she was giving to nobody in particular. After a minute or two of this I interrupted her to ask, once more without much success, about Lady Connemara.

"Denise? Oh, she went to Guadalajara this morning and won't be back till tomorrow. Be a lamb and fetch me another Cuba."

I had given up all hope of getting anything done and was preparing to leave massages when I heard a voice from upstairs.

"Hey!" it called. "Come up here."

* * *

I found Lady Connemara on the roof terrace, apparently making mud pies. She had a wooden trough full of mud, and she was mud to the elbow.

"This is a special clay I got out at Tonalá," she said. "It's very easy to work and fires well, and I am making a number of small images of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I paint them after they are baked, and I think they ought to sell very well, don't you?"

She had several more finished—flat-backed plaques of the Virgin in her great oval gloria. I said I thought the tourists might like them.

"Oh, yes, of course," she answered. "They can give them to friends at home or wear them as costume jewelry. But I mean to make the Indians buy them. I shall price them low. Three pesos." I could not help thinking of the two-hundred-dollar dress of which she was making such a mess. "Now tell me," she went on. "Don't you think I could bake them in that old German's oven?"

I said I would ask Mr. Humpel.

"I went round myself," said Lady Connemara. "But he wasn't there, so I just popped a few plaques into the oven and left them."

I thought Mr. Humpel might not care about this, so leaving my basket beside the trough with muttered regrets that I could not find room for a showcase on my veranda, I hurried off home to straighten things out. I was too late. As I came in from the garage,

Silvanito came into the patio at the half run he uses instead of a walk, carrying a note and a can.

I opened the envelope and read.

In my oven not today used, I found the six (6) figure cakes of worked loam now sent in her-ring tin. Please counsel all that the oven is my particular and return tin. In spite, be advise that I stay the next month (November) also.

I returned the six clay figures to Lady Connemara with a polite note to say she couldn't use the oven for her baking. The following day she came up to see me, and I showed her Mr. Humpel's letter.

"Surely it was the most natural thing in the world," she said. "The old Hun wasn't there when I went, so I just popped my figures into the back of the oven where they couldn't be in the way. Of course, I intended to warn him that they'd need several bakings. And by the way, Mr. Chandos, you owe me twelve pesos. Four of those plaques you brought back to me the other day were broken when I came to take them out of the basket."

I saw no reason why I should foot this bill, and though I'll do much for a quiet life I refused to pay her. She went off to interview Mr. Humpel, and in the evening he came to see me about her.

"The Lady Countess Connemara wishes to bake her apparitions in my oven," he said, groaning louder than usual. "It does not convene me, for I like my alone life, but I wish always to live at peace with the neighbor for my soul's sake. So I yessed her desire but said she must replace the fuel extra used. Pennies I do not wish, but the coals and kindlewood."

I said I thought that was a very reasonable stipulation.

"For when she sends to bake on my cook days," he went on, "I have asked three kilos of coals and half a kilo of wood, conditioned that there are not more than twenty little mud pictures and that you as house possessor have nothing there against. Last night, with my colded beer, I took a strong thing and today I am ever running. So please give me excusion."

I heard no more for several days, and then one morning Lady Connemara burst, unannounced, into my room where I was sitting at my desk typing.

"Look at this," she said, thrusting a crumpled sheet of paper into my hand.

I read:

Honored Madam Countess! For neighbor-ness sake I was conform that you should bake your figurettes in my breadoven, but to find earth everywhere I did not await. There have gone to the dogs two of my loafes entire, and four (4) roserolls, all muddled, for which you are to me indebted \$2.60 of national money, which please to send, for today I was climatex to find your virgins reposing on my pumpernickel.

"Did you ever hear the like?" said Lady Connemara. "I leave you to deal with the bill—"

I thought that was enough.

"Yes, all right," I said, "I'll settle up with Mr. Humpel. But on one condition: namely, that you leave this house now and don't come back—ever."

Adventure in Glass

By Audrey A. Georgi

WE turn down the cobblestone Catalan Street in the City of Guadalajara. The buildings on either side with their iron gates and window gratings look very much alike. Before one building with an inconspicuous sign: "Avalos Fabrica de Vidrio"—Avalos Glass Factory—we halt. From its unimposing exterior one would never guess what a wealth of magical color, form and beauty was within.

We knock with an ancient brass knocker and are admitted into a long, cool room. There our eyes are dazzled with the sight of tables and shelves filled with hundreds of green, red, gold and violet glass flowers, fruits, automobiles, parasols, dolls, clowns, animals... Whatever the artistic glass blowers can conjure from their imagination. That first glance is enough to convince us of what we had heard, viz., that the Avalos Glass Factory in Guadalajara has so advanced the art of glass making that today most other glass factories in the Western Hemisphere look to them for style in glassware.

Senor Odilon Avalos, Jr., who with his father owns and operates the factory, is bowing before us with all the grace and gallantry of the old world. His green eyes light up at our enthusiasm, and he offers to take us through the shops so that we may see for ourselves how all this magic is produced.

Before leaving the display room, Senor Avalos calls our attention to an oblong-shaped, deep blue vase and explains that it is precisely the same as the ancient French pattern. The Mexican blown glass industry, it seems, has its roots in the French glass industry. His grandfather learned the craft in the first glass factory in Mexico which had been established by French glass makers over a hundred years ago in the State of Puebla.

Grandfather Avalos learned his craft thoroughly and he set out to become Mexico's greatest pioneer in the artistic blown glass art, establishing factories in one place after another throughout Mexico. The first was in Texcoco; but as soon as it was functioning well, he sold it and built another in Puebla. This he sold and went on to build another in San Juan de los Llanos. He then built a factory in Toluca and finally one in Mexico City. He would have sold out this last factory had not his son, Camilo, persuaded him to keep it. To this day Camilo owns and operates the Mexico City factory of the Avalos family. Of the six factories which glass pioneer Avalos started, three are still running—in Mexico City, Texcoco and Toluca. His other son, Odilon Avalos, must have inherited something of his father's pioneer spirit for he established the Guadalajara factory which has been functioning for forty-five years.



Oil.

By F. R. Guillemin.

Senor Avalos points out several other vases having the same basic pattern as the old French design but varying greatly in details.

* * *

We pass through two rooms where bales, made from branches and packed with straw, await precious glassware to be packed into them and shipped to foreign countries. New York and Los Angeles, Senor Avalos tells us, are his best customers, although Canada, South and Central America also buy his glass. The European market is not so good, for Czechoslovakia's glass factories have long been supplying Europe's needs. But in the Western Hemisphere, he assures us with no little pride, the Avalos Glass Factory is the largest of the artistic, hand blown glass factories.

Next we enter a large, cool, cement-floored room, the storage room for the basic silica material—sand and salvaged glass, also the minerals which give color to the glass—manganese to make purple and green cobalt for blue, copper oxide for aquamarine. Senor Avalos tells us that only two factories in Mexico use a variety of colors in their work, both of which are in Guadalajara. The Avalos Factory uses twelve distinct hues in its glass production.

We step out upon the cobblestones of the sunlit patio with flowers, fig and apricot trees and a huge water trough with spigots where thirsty workers, dehydrated by working close to hot furnaces, come to fill their colored glass pitchers. In that delightful spot one would never believe he was in a factory where men toil.

Above us at one end of the patio we notice a miniature cathedral dome. It is the cupola over the furnace, Senor Avalos tells us, and he leads us into the furnace room, the largest, most important room of the whole establishment. They had to devise a special ventilation for this room. The terrific heat from the huge furnace, hot enough to smelt lead and copper as well as glass, would otherwise have been unbearable. The vaulted, domed structure, with many openings directly above the furnace, permits part of the heat to escape. Around the furnace at intervals, alternating with the oven openings, are great cement pillars which shield the workers from the direct blast of the blistering heat.

Our first impression is that we have come into the devil's workshop as we enter the hot furnace room and see thirty or more workers busy around the blistering cauldron. Some of them are dipping their long

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SUNRISE. OIL.

By Vita Castro.

Women in Contemporary Mexican Art

By Jorge Juan Crespo de la Serna

DURING the bygone years of the present century the women in this country have been conquering positions of high level and dignity in activities that formerly had been pursued solely by men. We have observed how our women have gradually made a place for themselves in office tasks, in manual as well as intellectual endeavours, in complex and responsible occupations. Women have mixed with men in schools, universities, laboratories, in scientific and industrial enterprise. They have acquired recognition and honors, have excelled themselves and have grown conscious of possibilities outside the sphere of their traditional vocations. They have competed with men in physical, intellectual and political efforts. The woman in Mexico is indeed no longer a separate social entity. She has gained a new prestige which has enriched her innate gifts. Her fortitude, her abnegation, her admirable perception which stems from fine intuition, are no longer expressed in exceptional cases. She has been definitely absorbed in the everyday life of the country, holding her own with the man, and even excelling him in not a few endeavours.

Naturally, art has not escaped the woman's curiosity and effort. I am referring to the art of painting, sculpture and engraving, and not to that of literature or music, wherein, probably because it has always been part of her domestic upbringing, she has enjoyed greater opportunities. In the past her excursions into the field of plastic arts have been in the nature of mere adornment. Classes of drawing and painting in schools were, in fact, known as those of

adornment—an avocation of slight importance, a pastime or hobby, which was nearly always eventually abandoned through the pressure of circumstance.

This condition has been apparently left behind, and now we have among us an appreciable contingent of women artists, some mature in their profession, others along the road of valid improvement.

* * *

In the exhibit currently offered by the Salon de la Plástica Mexicana we have for the first time in Mexico a collection of works by a group of women artists, most of whom are already known to our public through their participation in former group exhibits by artists of both sexes or through individual showings.

This, as regards a fixed tendency or a school, is not a homogeneous group. We observe in this show, however, unmistakable traces of the specific trend which characterizes the work of most of our painters and sculptors—that is, respect for reality, the peculiar national terms in stylization or synthesis, a bent for the traditional preference in the selection of themes, a breath of lyricism stemming from a deeply sensitive imagery, the employment of a color gamut obviously springing from predilections of popular taste.

But within these common denominators the spectator can discern that each voice is distinct from the other, that each defines a difference in temperament and even in technique. Along the side of such painters of undeniable vigor and personality as Frida Kahlo or

Maria Izquierdo, recognized in their distinct manners for years, there are those who although born in lands across the seas are completely merged with the Mexican art movement, such as Olga Costa, Angelina Beloff and Fanny Rabel. And here also is the work of Cordelia Urueta, with its eager pursuit of expression that may appease an urge to be entirely herself, and whose experiments have been so rich in achievement.

Here, too, is present, and will always be, the art of the delicate and gifted Isabel Villaseñor, whose ge-



PORTRAIT OF A GIRL. Tempera.

By Celia Calderón.



THE FRIENDLY TREE. Tempera and Oil. By Fanny Rabel.

nerous life and career had ended untimely. And with the somewhat faltering though determined and youthfully impetuous utterings of such painters as Celia Calderon, or the already mentioned Fanny Rabel, we may see for the first time works by Gloria Calero, Vita Castro and Rosa Covarrubias.

In the sculptures by Geles Cabrera, Maria Galan, Rosa Castillo and Irma Díaz we find outlines of delicate personalities, affirmations of aptitudes which herald greater future achievements.



THIRD OF MAY FIESTA. Oil.
By Angelina Beloff.



MADONNA. Oil.

By Gloria Calero.



ON THE STREET. Oil.

By Fanny Rabel.

STILL LIFE. Oil.

By Olga Costa.



Un Poco de Todo

MACHINES THAT REPRODUCE THEMSELVES

It did not astonish the experts on cybernetics to learn last month from correspondents in London that in the mathematical laboratory of the University of Cambridge there is a machine that can profit by experience. In this respect the machine surpasses many a human being. Indeed, one form of insanity is characterized by an inability to learn from experience, from which it follows that this Edsac machine is of sound mind.

Edsac is a merciful abbreviation of "electronic delay storage automatic calculator." The machine can be trained like a dog to respond to external stimuli, meaning that it has reflexes that can be conditioned. The newest Cambridge version of Edsac either responds to any number between zero and seven or else throws back an "x" to indicate that it cannot make up its mind. London correspondents reports that when Dr. Maurice V. Wilkes of the Cambridge mathematical laboratory selected the number 3 and repeatedly stimulated the machine so that it printed numbers at random it "expressed strong disapproval" of any number but 3. After a time the trained machine would print only 3.

Similar machines have been constructed in the United States. In one a mechanical mouse blunders about in a complicated maze until by a process of trial and error it finds its way to a piece of "cheese" in a corner. Placed in the maze a second time the mouse runs directly to the "cheese." The performance is much better than that of a live mouse in the same situation.

Though the possibilities of electronic computers have been thoroughly explored, Dr. Claude E. Shannon of the Bell Telephone Laboratories managed to add some new ones to the list in a paper that he read at the Diamond Jubilee Convocation of the Case Institute of Technology.

"What can we expect in the development of computing machines in the next twenty or thirty years?" asked Dr. Shannon. In his opinion the newly developed transistor, which can do about all that the vacuum tube does, will play its part in computers. Some electronic computers contain thousands of tubes. The transistor is small, its life is very long, its consumption of power low. It follows that computers-to-be will be very compact.

An electronic computer must have a memory; that is, it must store up information for future use. Dr. Shannon sees possibilities in the recently developed ferro-electric memory which takes up very little space and requires no power. "Devices such as these suggest that the computers of the future may be extremely compact," thinks Dr. Shannon.

Ask Dr. Shannon whether or not the computers think and he asks: "What do you mean by 'think'?" If playing checkers or chess means thinking, machines can be designed that will apply general principles (not moves) in various situations and do this so skillfully that they can defeat their designers. "Here I am speaking from personal experience," Dr. Shannon confesses.

But the machine that commends Dr. Shannon's admiration is one proposed by Dr. John von Neumann—a machine that reproduces itself. It has been maintained that we ought not to fool ourselves by thinking that the computers are duplicates of living organism. After all a machine cannot reproduce itself, runs the argument, though reproduction and thinking are not related. Von Neumann has shown mathematic-

ally that reproduction is possible. According to Dr. Shannon, one of these hypothetical but possible machines will collect parts from its environment and assemble them to produce a duplicate which then starts collecting parts to construct a triplicate and so on ad infinitum. Writers of science fiction no doubt will take note of such possibilities and in their tales destroy society by overpopulating the world with machines that will never stop reproducing their kind and never "die."

EARTH'S INTERIOR IS A DYNAMO

In London Dr. Edward C. Bullard of Britain's National Physical Laboratory has set forth again his hypothesis that the earth is a huge dynamo. We say "again" because he has been expounding his hypothesis for some years, so that it is not exactly scientific news. It is the most plausible hypothesis so far advanced to account for the earth's magnetism.

The earth is supposed to have a liquid core of molten iron encased in a solid shell of rocks, chiefly silicates. It is not likely that this core is a permanent magnet like the horseshoe magnets that are the delight of boys. Only a solid mass of iron (the lodestone of the ancients or what we call magnetite) can be magnetic. It follows that a core of liquid iron cannot be magnetic. Yet the compass needle testifies to the fact of terrestrial magnetism.

The notion that the earth's field is the result of permanent magnetism is rejected by most geophysicists. Dr. Walter M. Elsasser shares most of Bullard's skepticism on this point. Both Bullard and Elsasser believe that there must be electric currents. That such currents can produce magnetic effects is common knowledge.

If the liquid core is to be regarded as a dynamo there must be motion. Both Elsasser and Bullard believe that the core is radioactive and that radioactivity generates enough heat to produce motion (convection currents) in the core. The difference between the rates of rotation of the inner and outer parts of the core need not be great to generate a current, provided there is a magnetic field. To explain terrestrial magnetism with the aid of terrestrial magnetism seems illogical. But there is no illogicality about it. We see what happens in a self-exciting dynamo.

* * *

This hypothesis of Bullard's can be more easily reconciled with what has been observed than any other. Thus the earth's magnetic field varies considerably in a century. But if the liquid core moves, as Bullard and Elsasser think it does, the variations are about what physicists would expect.

Sunspots are known to be magnetic. According to Bullard a sunspot may be a place where a "toroidal field" comes to the surface. By a toroidal field he means one that is produced by lines of magnetic force that are concentric with an axis. Such a toroidal field could never appear on the earth because of the solid outer shell. There are no "earth spots." Bullard does not hold that a toroidal field explains everything about sunspots. Indeed, it leaves much unexplained about terrestrial, solar and stellar magnetism, but it explains far more than does any other hypothesis that has so far been formulated.

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Literary Appraisals

THE MEXICAN VENTURE: From Political to Industrial Revolution in Mexico. BY Tomme Clark Call. Illustrated. 237 pp. New York: Oxford University Press.

SO much emphasis has been placed on the political and sanguinary aspects of the Mexican Revolution of 1910 that the average American has a lurid mental picture of it. He sees galloping bandits, desecrated churches, burning haciendas and ruined cities; now and then he has a glimpse, perhaps, through the smoke and confusion of perplexed Indian peons and Mexican laborers, of members of the middle and lower class wondering whether the struggle has accomplished anything.

Here at last is the story, as complete as can be obtained anywhere, of the less dramatic but more solid achievements of the Mexican Revolution. The revolution has, in spite of fury and violence, attained incredible accomplishments in economic, social, and cultural fields and made Mexico truly a nation. It gave this nation an important place in international affairs.

In spite of its title, Tomme Clark Call's book is more than a mere venture. It is the generally ignored other side of the picture of the Mexican Revolution that so fundamentally changed the thinking of Mexico and her people and started the Mexican on the way to modern living.

The author is a reporter rather than a historian—and his writing, at times, is weakened by generalizations on the historical background of the last fifty years of strife and progress. "The 1911 Madero revolution," he notes, "might have led to stable, free government; but the Díaz beneficiaries, with the lamented help of the United States Ambassador, scuttled the effort. The Victoriano Huerta-Henry Lane Wilson conspiracy, with 'the tragic ten days' that shook Mexico City and ended with Francisco I. Madero's murder in 1913, sought foolishly to turn back time's clock. The result was anarchy. For a bloody decade, the people of Mexico writhed in misery and in the world's shame as revolutionary leaders waged internecine warfare in the political vacuum left by the Díaz dictatorship." Such writing, to this reader at least, smacks of impressionistic journalism.

Mr. Call is on much more solid ground when he begins to discuss the development that characterizes Mexican social, economic and cultural progress during the last forty years. This is where the value of the present study (made possible by a Reid Foundation Fellowship) lies. Briefly summarizing the early years of the revolution, he traces in detail the persistent effort of the various leaders from the days of Carranza to those of Alemán to implement and put into effect the economic, social and cultural aspirations of the submerged classes that have brought the Mestizo element into full control of the Government at last.

* * *

He tells how these aspects of the revolution first took concrete form in the Constitution of 1917 and the ruling of Articles 27 and 123. The agrarian program that highlighted the Cárdenas Administration, and the persistent attempts to make the cry of "Tierra y Libros!" (Land and Books!) a reality by providing greater educational opportunities for young and old are other phases rather fully described. The account of the beginnings of the labor movement in Mexico and its role in the social reform program constitutes another illuminating chapter, as does the story of the

effort to industrialize even at the cost of agricultural development.

"Mexican Venture" is a forceful presentation, recorded with sympathetic understanding, of Mexico's struggle to catch up with the modern world after almost four hundred years of colonial economy. It is an optimistic appraisal of the material gains of the revolution and the attempt of each succeeding administration to consolidate those gains. As the author sees it, the future is hopeful. In his closing paragraph, he summarizes: "The broad march of its aims and works seems in the right direction to a better future, such as is surely deserved by a long-suffering people willing to earn what they want and eager to learn how that may be done."

C. E. C.

PERON'S ARGENTINA. By George I. Blanksten. 47 pp. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

THIS is the most serious attempt so far to put the inflation-ridden, bomb-wracked Argentina of Juan Domingo Perón into one book, to explain peronismo and to relate it to the hemisphere policy of the United States, which President Eisenhower has just redefined. As such, Mr. Blanksten's work is timely, impressive, uneven, disturbing, heavily documented, and of essential interest to the specialist on Latin America. A general reader will learn a lot without being particularly entertained.

The author had four years with the "Argentine question" in Washington before being enabled to spend 1950-51 in Perón's country as a Fellow of the Social Science Research Council. Probably his main contribution toward an answer to that question, as it stands in 1953, is his analysis of justicialismo, the curious philosophy which Perón personally expounded at a conference of scholars in Mendoza in April, 1949. Some invited Americans boycotted the conference and others attended, under subsidy.

Mr. Blanksten generously summarizes Perón's exposition, which has since been used, rather ineffectually, as a foundation for the diplomacy of his "Third Position"—a movable point somewhere between the extremes of capitalism and communism. The writer then cuts boldly through the dialectic and puts the justicialist leader in the role of a juggler trying to keep seven balls in the air at once. The balls are special interest groups—the army, the church, the wealthy landowners, the foreign "imperialists," labor, the people outside of Buenos Aires and the demanding portenos themselves.

"Justicialismo is a juggler's act," he continues. "The performer must keep all seven balls in motion, and he must remain equidistant from all of them. It is, in a sense, a tragic performance if the observer harbors sympathy for the clown *** There is only one way the performance can end: at least one of the seven balls will fall on the juggler's head ***. At least one of them will kill him."

* * *

The figure is fully validated by the latest crisis in Buenos Aires, in which the juggler is engaged in some of his most precarious maneuvers to maintain the delicate balance and avoid the catastrophe.

The author for the most part fails, however, to communicate the constant and sometimes terrible emo-

tion with which the situation in Argentina has been charged. He gets closest to it in a few pages about the *picana eléctrica*, or electric goad, the Perón regime's own contribution to the science of non-fatal physical torture. In general, his text is solid and provocative. But it tends to lose impact for lack of sharp, telling detail.

For instance, you will not learn from Mr. Blanksten what one of the great peronista rallies in the Plaza de Mayo—such as the one where the fatal bombing occurred on April 15—is like; the waiting throngs of men and women packed beneath the Casa Rosada balcony at one end of the plaza but revealingly thinned out at the other; the gimlet-eyed venders of blue-and-white buttons and rosettes; the swelling, mindless chant of "La vida por Perón ***" Yet these very sights and sounds are the substance of peronismo in action—and they suggest the terrible potentiality for destruction that exists should Perón, in ultimate self-defense, decide to unleash it.

With regard to the United States and the hemisphere, the author holds that since its inception sixty-three years ago Pan-Americanism "may be said to consist of the Washington Government's attempts to organize all of the American republics in support of the foreign policy of the United States." This is pretty harsh, alongside President Eisenhower's cautious pacan to the "spirit of America." But it is also pretty true. Nor is it to say that these attempts, which have usually been expedient, have necessarily been ignoble.

It is unfortunate and a little puzzling that in a book evidencing so much scholarship, either the research or the editing slipped in so many places. Mr. Blanksten errs in at least six proper names, including those of two Americans. He says that on March 1, 1948, Perón, "in a spirit of triumph *** officiated" at the ceremony marking the acquisition of the British railroads. The fact is, Perón was stricken with appendicitis the night before, missed the ceremony and could manage only a few husky words in connection with it from his hospital bed.

Why the late Señora Perón should be called Evita in the first half of the book and "Evita" in quotes

in the second is incomprehensible. The new province was named Eva Perón, not Evita Perón. And since Mr. Blanksten italicize his Spanish, his strong tendency also to italicize English words for emphasis is confusing. But such flaws notwithstanding, "Perón's Argentina" is a major work on a subject complex enough to have pretty generally stumped United States diplomacy for a decade.

M. B.

THE GOLDEN EAGLE. By Noel B. Gerson. 313 pp. New York: Doubleday & Co.

THE Mexican War has figured too seldom in historical fiction; Mr. Gerson's novel rouses that somewhat torpid conflict from its long siesta and puts zip and vinegar in it. He has done this with a robust yarn of a robust Texan adventurer, one Jonathan Wyatt, a man who has a way with percussion rifles and explosive señoras. Serving as a one-man spy system for U.S. forces in the Southern Republic, Jonathan maps Vera Cruz for the invasion by Gen. Winfield Scott and picks up pertinent information in the City of Mexico, while having some troubles of his own, mainly with two beautiful ladies.

Though Mr. Gerson's tale is of high romance below the border, he wallops in some punches of historical significance. For example, just before the war, it was possible for an individual to buy percussion rifles from the United States Army and skedaddle into Mexico with them. At the time war fever was rising, Jonathan was attempting to purchase 250 such guns for a rancho known as the Golden Eagle in Mexico. In the U.S. there was a loud cry for the annexation of Mexico, which, with its distinct classes of landed barons and peons, was in deep turmoil. It was stung by the loss of Texas, and the unlearned and unsettled people were in such confusion that their loyalties turned again to the military despot, Santa Anna, who ten years before had lost to Texans in their war for independence. All this, as viewed across the years from the atom bomb back to the percussion cap, was a historical process of growing up.

HOTEL
PARIS MANSION
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Mr. Greson's crisp narrative hews to the line of pure fact, even to having a future Confederate general, Robert E. Lee, crawl into an ant-infested hollow log and listen to an afternoon-long discussion of plans by enemy officers who are sitting on the log.

L. N.

DOM CASMURRO. By Machado de Assis. Translated from the Portuguese by Helen Caldwell. 283 pp. New York: The Noonday Press.

THOUGH he died in 1908, Machado de Assis is still considered Brazil's leading man of letters. Indeed, his "Epitaph of a Small Winner," first published in 1880 and first translated into English last fall, has been compared favorably with the best works by Hardy, Flaubert, James, Kafka and Proust. Perhaps this is praising with too faint damns, but the publication of his more mature novel, "Dom Casmurro," which first appeared in 1900, should prove conclusively that Machado de Assis is one of the novelists who deserves an international reputation.

This is not likely to be the opinion of those who read "Dom Casmurro" carelessly on the run. The constant calls to the "dear reader," the occasional insertion of irrelevant discourses such as the one about the worms who gnaw about books, and the deceptively thin line of the narrative will cause some readers to underestimate the book. This apparently thin line of action is told by the narrator and protagonist, Bento Santiago, later to be called Dom Casmurro because he becomes "morose and tight-lipped" as he tries to tie together the two ends of his life, "to restore adolescence in old age."

He tells of his childhood love for Capitú, whom he almost does not marry because of his mother's pro-

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mise he will become a priest, of his ultimate marriage to, suspicion of, and separation from his childhood sweetheart. Though the narrative advances with fewer digressions than one finds in "Epitaph of a Small Winner," still the progress is unsteady, the "shirt-sleeves and suspenders" style annoying to the reader who expects a steady advance toward a climax.

As a matter of fact the reader who does not value successful unconventionality in both manner and substance should avoid "Dom Casmurro." The extraordinary virtue and charm of the novel is the consequence of de Assis' skillful blending of his own original insight and sensibility with the technique he learned from Sterne. The clipped interior monologues that suggest almost as much as Proust tells fully, the apparently impertinent but actually pertinent discourses on life, fate and chance make the book.

As Waldo Frank says in his fine introduction, de Assis shows the essential ambiguity in all of us by dramatizing the ambiguity in the lives of his characters. Neither Bento, nor his mother, nor Capitú drive more steadfastly toward their mark than does the narrative. Doña Gloria wishes and does not wish her son to be a priest; Bento loves his mother and wishes her dead; Capitú is perhaps a faithful, quite as possibly a faithless wife. As Bento says, "the devil's seconds have gotten intercalated into the minutes of God" in all the people he knew. This tragic truth about the motivation, morals and conduct of man is, lamentably, at the core of the modern dilemma we all should know and face.

H. C. W

THE HORSEMEN OF THE AMERICAS AND THE LITERATURE THEY INSPIRED. By Edward Laroque Tinker. 149 pp. Illustrated. Limited edition. New York Hastings House

WERE this beautiful volume four times as large, its author might have done justice to the tremendously ambitious task of combining a history of the horsemen of Argentina, Mexico, and the United

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States with a critique of literature on the gaucho, the charro, and the cowboy. This is borne out by the fact that the forty-eight pages devoted to the gaucho are far and away the best portion of the book. Only twenty pages are given to the Mexican horseman and nineteen to the American cowboy and their literature. The bibliography includes forty pages.

No horsemen in the world have ever surpassed the gaucho of the Argentine, nor have any ever developed more unusual costume or equipment. The original gaucho trousers were very full, lace-trimmed, cotton drawers supplemented by a square of hand-woven cloth which resembled a huge diaper and was worn like one. The gaucho carried a two-foot knife and a spear with a crescent-shaped blade with which he could hamstring forty cattle in an hour. Cattle were killed and skinned with the knife—only the hides were taken. Other equipment, still used on the pampas, was the boleadora, three weighted cords which were whirled about the head and thrown to entangle the legs of the quarry. They were highly effective, says Mr. Tinker, at ranges as long as seventy-five yards.

Mr. Tinker's chapters on the gaucho are of absorbing interest, but his treatment of the Mexican charro and the cowboy is brief and sketchy. He completely ignores, for example, the Mexican rurales who were one of the most remarkable—though far from praise-worthy—mounted forces ever created.

In format and illustration "Horsemen of the Americas" is truly magnificent. The color prints of gaucho life are by E. Castells Capurro; the Mexican illustrators are Feliciano Peña and José Guadalupe Posada; portrayal of the American cowboy is by Nick Eggenhofer, Chip Wood, and Herbert Haseltine. It is unfortunate that so limited an edition will prevent many from owning this unusual and desirable volume.

H B.

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Current Attractions

OPERA NACIONAL

By Vane C. Dalton

THE Opera Nacional Company concluded its season at the Palacio de Bellas Artes—a season which started off at a rather uncertain pace—in a veritable blaze of glory with the presentation during the final three weeks of “Boris Godunov,” “Mephistopheles” and “The Barber of Seville.” Performed by a cast of truly extraordinary singers, these final plays fully made up for the unfortunate blunders that threatened at the outset to spoil the season. After the disconcertion of the preceding weeks, the audience, swept by the sheer brilliance of the performance, responded with stormy ovations and innumerable curtain calls.

Particularly impressive was the ovation accorded “The Barber of Seville,” or, more precisely, the three leading male singers—Salvatore Baccaloni, in the role of Bartolo, and who a week earlier fascinated the audience enacting the part of Vaarlam in “Boris Godunov,” Nicola Rossi Lemeni, in the role of Don Basilio, and Robert Merrill, who is justly reputed to be the best Figaro in the world.

Our audience, traditionally accustomed to expect greatness only from singers of European background, was astounded and captivated by the performance of Robert Merrill, the handsome young man from Brooklyn, and star baritone of the Metropolitan Opera. His personal triumph was the more notable considering this traditional bias.

His local triumph, however, rounds out the seventh year of a spectacular career that outdoes almost

everything in the way of American musical success stories. Classed by Toscanini as one of the all time baritone greats, Robert Merrill is not only the Metropolitan's most versatile performer; he is also the star with the most unusual background. For one thing, he is entirely American trained.

We gather that while he started out as a semi-professional baseball player, he studied music under his mother's supervision. Long before he was known to Metropolitan audiences, dividing his time between baseball and singing, he was a popular figure as a singer of ballads and semi-classical music in summer resort hotels or aboard cruise ships. It was in a summer hotel, as a matter of fact, that Robert Merrill attracted the attention which started him on the road to the Metropolitan. A well known theatrical manager heard him, and advised him on the first steps of his career. He decided to take up serious musical training, which, despite an unsuccessful, probably premature, tryout for the Metropolitan in 1939, he never abandoned.

Robert Merrill commenced his spectacular rise during 1945. In rapid succession he won a contract at the Metropolitan, a long term contract with RCA Victor recording studios, and an exclusive radio-television contract with the National Broadcasting stations. His progress to wide fame was rapid through the following years.

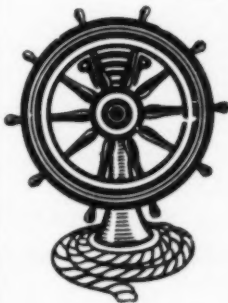
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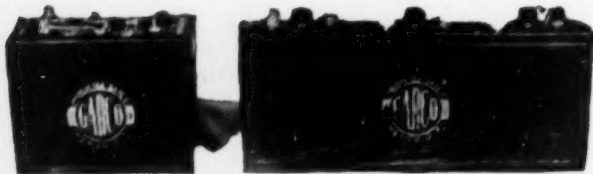
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tence. After his initial unsuccessful tryout at the Metropolitan, while singing ballads, folk songs, semi-classical favorites and operatic arias, at Radio City in New York and on tours of American cities, he continued careful coaching for opera roles. He made his debut as Amonasro in "Aida" at Trenton, New Jersey, and this availed him a second try at the Metropolitan. Few singers have ever received such rousing applause on their first appearance at the Metropolitan as the 26 year old Merrill received on December 15, 1945, for performing the part of Germont in "La Traviata."

In bringing such singers as Robert Merrill, Salvatore Baccaloni and Nicola Rossi Lemeni to the Bellas Artes, the Opera Nacional has more than fulfilled its obligation with the audience. It has brought the season to a crowning triumph and has thereby substantially solidified its prestige.

In addition to these three star performers, the Opera Nacional brought from abroad especially for "The Barber of Seville" the soprano Graciela Rivera and the tenor Bruno Landi, two singers of excellent voices, clear and correct phrasing, and a fine musical sense. Though lacking outstanding volume, these singers ably supported the leading performers. The rest of the cast was made up of Concha de los Santos, in the role of Berta, Francisco Tortolero, in that of Fiorello, and Manuel Carreño in that of the Sergeant.

The highly competent direction of De Fabritis fully expressed the peculiar charm of this opera, save, perhaps, for some passages, especially in the third act, which we would have preferred to be a little more agile and rapid in tempo.

As regards "Mephistopheles" and "Boris Godunov," presented by this company during the preceding fortnight, the personal triumph, much as that of Robert Merrill in the "Barber of Seville," was that of the stupendous basso Nicola Rossi Lemeni. On both occasions this formidable singer fascinated the audience with his magnificent performance.

Directed by Luis Sandi, "Mephistopheles," whose cast in addition to Rossi Lemeni, included the soprano

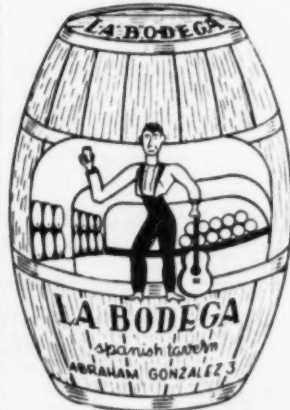
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Rosa Rimoch and the tenor Giuseppe Cámpora, was in every way a brilliant event. The great Italian basso interpreted his role with originality and puissance. Roita Rimoch was quite delightful in the role of Margarita, achieving her finest moments in the prison scene. Giuseppe Cámpora was splendid in the part of Faust.

The fine performance of the supporting cast—Concha de los Santos, Celia Garcia and Jose Sosa—justly earned a good share of the tumultuous applause, and the same can be said for the chorus, ably directed by Hernandez Moncada.

It is a pity that operas as costly and complex as these are restricted here to only two or three presentations. For I have observed that the second and third performance usually, and for obvious reasons, excels the first. The special third performance of "Boris Godunov" was, for instance, greatly superior to the preceding two. It was on this final occasion that Nicola Rossi Lemeni, in the role of Boris, rose to veritable perfection. I understand, of course, that for box-office reasons the Opera Nacional must offer an ample repertoire, and yet I am inclined to believe that it would achieve a greater artistic success if it stressed quality instead of quantity.

At any rate, the superb quality introduced by the Opera Nacional company during the final offerings of its latest season has created a precedent wherefrom it will hardly be able to deviate in the future.

SYMPHONY

The eminent pianist Alexander Borowsky returned to our midst to appear as soloist with the University Symphony Orchestra, which is currently presenting a season of Sunday morning concerts at the Palacio de Bellas Artes.

In a program conducted by José Roa-bruna, Borowsky executed Bach's Concerto in Re minor and Liszt's Concerto No. 1. Borowsky's masterly interpretation of these two highly different works and the orchestra's able performance elicited warm applause from the capacity audience.

The program ended with a quite satisfactory rendition of Prokofieff's Classical Symphony.



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Art and Personal Notes

THE exposition sponsored by the French Institute of Latin America (Calle de Nazas No. 43) and titled "A Century of French Painting," was last month's outstanding art event. Charging an admission price of twenty pesos, and organized with the charitable aim of raising funds that provide breakfasts for indigent children in our primary schools, this show included works from private collections by such renowned masters as Corot, Renoir, Degas, Pissarro, Monet, Cezanne, Bonnard, Gauguin, Modigliani, Dufy, Utrillo, Rouault, Dunoyer de Segonzac, Derain, Picasso, Vlaminck and Marcita.

THE art gallery "Nuevas Generaciones, conducted by the National Institute of Fine Arts (Corner of Calles Heroes and Esmeralda) offers to the public a permanent sales exhibition of paintings and sculpture by select students of the Esmeralda and San Carlos art schools.

GALERIA ROMANO (José Maria Marroquí No. 5) is presenting at this time a varied group exhibit of paintings in oil and water color by Sahagún, Vazquez, Calvo, Filser, Espejo, Velazquez, Estrada and others.

THE most unusual exposition currently offered by the "Arte Moderno" gallery (Calle de Roma No. 21) and titled "Painters of the School of Paris," comprises oils, water colors, temperas, lithographs and etchings by Bonnard, Braque, Daumier, Degas, Dessegonzac, Dufy, Laurencin, Leger, Matisse, Picasso, Renoir, Rouault, Signac, Utrillo and Valdon.

THE Saloneito Gallery of the Mexico City College (Calle de Jalapa No. 147) presented in the course of last month a quite interesting exposition of photographs and paintings in water color by J. Milford Ellison.

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THE Inter-American Committee to Combat Infant Malnutrition extends a public invitation to the exhibition of original works by Ken Beldin, given at the Summer School of the National University (Avenida de San Cosme No. 71). The exhibited works consist of bas-relief paintings executed in oxidized, burned and polished metals, wood, ceramics, leather and stone, and inspired by pre-Columbian motives.

DRAWINGS and paintings in oil and water color by Mario Orozco Rivera, a young Mexican artist of considerable promise, are on show at this time in the galleries of the Circulo de Bellas Artes de Mexico (Calle de Lisboa No. 48).

THE Anglo-Mexican Cultural Institute (Calle de Panuco No. 10) is presenting an exhibition of works by British painters who are residing and working in Mexico. The show includes works by Leonora Carrington, Valetta Swann, Toby Joysmith, Robin Bond, Walter Plumb and Robert Hesketh.

GALERIA Arte Contemporaneo (Calle de Ambarés No. 12) is showing during this month a group of drawings, lithographs and etchings by the noted Mexican artist Francisco Dosamantes.

LANDSCAPES by Gilberto Chavez comprise the voluminous one-man show presented by the National Institute of Fine Arts in the Fine Arts salon of the Palacio de Bellas Artes.

A COLLECTION of prints by the group of local artists who comprise the Sociedad Mexicana de Grabadores is on show at the Ateneo Español de Mexico (Avenida Morelos No. 26). The following artists are represented in this show: Carlos Alvarado Lang, Abelardo Avila, Luis Beltrán, Celia Calderón, Pedro Castelar, Erasto Cortés Juárez, Manuel Echauri, Gabriel Fernandez Ledesma, Angeles Garduño, Alfredo Guati Rojo, Manuel Herrera Cartalla, José Julio Rodríguez, Amador Lugo, Feliciano Peña, Francisco Vázquez and Angel Zamarripa.



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Patterns of an Old City

Continued from page 20

me cannot be measured in terms of hours or days. I have lost them, lost them irretrievably, and I too am lost.

* * *

Olivares was in his early fifties when he met Graciela, and she was about half his age. It was preposterous, he thought, that she could arouse in him disturbing feelings he had not known in many years, and that she in turn would actually respond to such feelings. It began through a business transaction, in the course of his prolonged efforts to sell her a car. When in the end she did not buy the car from him—deciding to acquire a new one—he thought that the casual invitation to drop in at her apartment for a drink was a polite atoning gesture. Women, especially beautiful women, were whimsical creatures, and one could never figure out what was in their minds.

He felt bewildered and ill at ease as he sat at her side on the sofa striving to carry on a casual talk, but presently, when on her insistence he had taken several drinks, his unease diminished somewhat, and he began to feel that perhaps there was no ulterior motive in her baffling conduct, and that though it was utterly incongruous, she might even be truly interested in him as a person. It was a pleasant and a rather audacious supposition, though when he left her he was yet in doubt.

His shyness was gone when he called on her again a few days hence. He knew this time why he came, and albeit frightened by his purpose, he proceeded boldly, recklessly, to achieve it. She did not seem to be surprised by his conduct. She did not resist his impetuosity, did not defend herself against the burst of belated passion, against this unseemly release of pentup middleage lust. Her attitude indeed seemed to reveal that she had expected it and was not averse to receive it.

Suddenly a new life began for Olivares. Suddenly he found himself transported from drab inconsequence to stirring adventure, from apathy and resignation to fervent anticipation, to a new substance and outlook, to an existence that retrieved an immediate meaning and purpose and yet offered the lure of mystery and danger, and with it the torment of fear and uncertainty.

For he had never, from the first day to the last, fathomed Graciela. He could never comprehend the hidden inner urge, the wayward impulse, the abstruse

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design which made her choose him for a closest friend and lover—which made her select an impecunious and in every way quite mediocre elderly man in preference to almost any man she could choose at will. Was she impelled by some aberrant passion wherein pity, the longing for an absent father, a temporary satiation with profligacy, were mingled with a sincere craving for love and devotion? Or was it a mere whim, a perverse and passing predilection for something obviously unworthy which yet appeased in her some obscure possessive urge?

These things he never came to understand. Even after he thought he knew her intimately, minutely, even after he had been able to form an objective, unsentimental image of her—an image of a volatile, moody, flamboyant young woman—, even after he thought he understood her unpredictably changing moods and discerned beneath the surface of her loveliness her essential vulgarity, humorlessness and smothering egotism, he could not unravel the innermost mystery of her being. He only knew that she embodied distressing anomaly and contradiction, that she was motivated by incongruous impulses which robbed all her action, all her emotion, of reason or permanence.

He could not understand why a girl reared in a quite sedate and respectable middleclass family in Guadalajara would willfully choose to abandon her kith and kin because "there were too many young men in love with her," to become a derelict in this city, and notwithstanding an adequate allowance she received from home to select the iniquitous calling of a "dancing hostess" in a sordid dive. He was sure that she was prompted by neither greed or salaciousness, that at the core she was neither venal or promiscuous, and though it seemed completely senseless had to accept the vague and unrevealing explanation that it was "just to have something to do."



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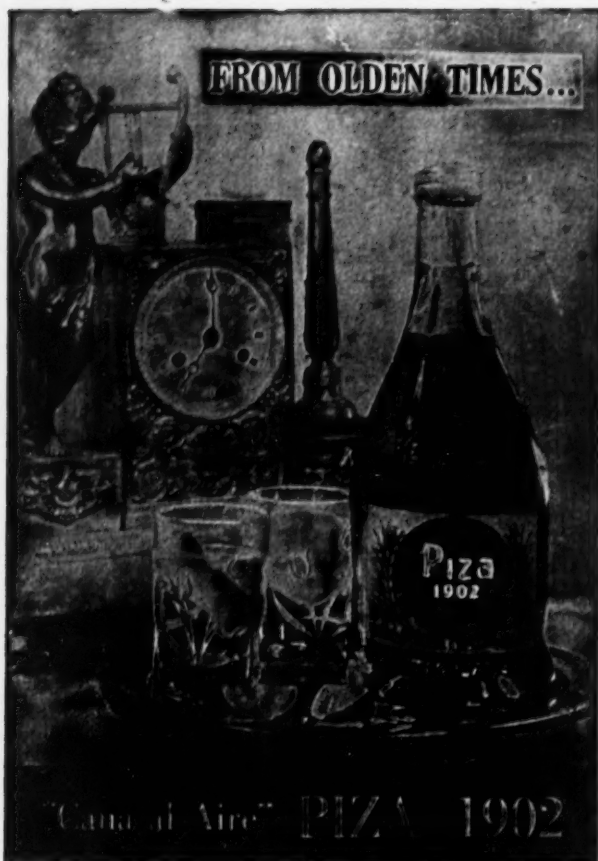


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Thus all his dealings with her, providing no sense of security, no promise of final and total possession, had an unreal; a dreamlike mercurial quality. And dwelling within a reality that approached a dream, he endured the constant fear of an awakening. Even when she became pregnant and when she assured him that there had been no other man, that he was indeed the father of the child she bore within, that she would have this child because it was his, though he was sure she spoke the truth, —though now they were joined by the utmost bond that can hold a man and a woman together—he did not feel secure. He was stirred with an ineffable joy, a feeling of his own rebirth, of a final vindication of his own wasted life, of an ultimate belated triumph and recompense; it plunged him into an ecstatic felicity, but it brought him no final tangible hope. For beyond this exultation there was no assurance that he could ever truly possess Graciela, that like some rare and beautiful bird she merely paused for a while in her heedless flight, but not to submit to captivity—that in the end she would inevitably resume her flight.

Hence, through the blissful oblivious days, through the trying months of anticipation, while helplessly enslaved by Graciela, he yet lacked the strength or decision to abandon Elena. He clung to her as helplessly as he clung to Graciela, for as unworthy as she was, she yet defined the sole security, the sole enduring possession he had achieved in life. She yet defined reality, while Graciela defined a dream. Now that he was emotionally lost, in a practical sense he needed her more than ever. In all her worthlessness she was an inseparable part of himself. Even more, the void of their existence had not been deepened: it had been actually filled by Graciela's intrusion. From the very beginning of his involvement he did not attempt to deceive her. Without malicious purpose, without the slightest compunction, probably feeling that she was unworthy even of deceit, he told her the truth. Bluntly, with a pitiless callousness, he revealed to her his happiness, if he thought that in some perverse manner she might be able to share it. And though it was wholly incongruous, she endured her torture without complaint. She did not reprove or demand; inured to pain, to suffering and loneliness, she seemed to be emotionally invulnerable.

During the months of Graciela's pregnancy, she secretly shared with him his deep anxiety, and when finally he brought her the news that the boy was born,

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surmising the perplexity in his joy, meekly, fearfully, she suggested that if it might turn out to be a hindrance or burden for his mother, she would be very glad if he brought the infant home, so that she could take care of him. He left this suggestion unanswered, for he was too bewildered to comprehend its meaning. And yet, a few weeks later, he made the same suggestion to Graciela as an alternative choice. He would divorce his wife, he told her, and he would marry her so as to give their son a proper name and home, or if she did not wish to marry him, if she wished to preserve her entire freedom, he would help her by taking the child off her hands.

She did not answer. She withheld her reply till the eve of her departure a few days later, clumsily worded in a note she left behind. She was sorry, she said, but there was no other way out. She was going back to Guadalajara to beg forgiveness from her family. It would be an ordeal, but they would receive her. She loved him, but not enough to marry him. She would keep the child; she did not wish to share him with anyone, for now she realized that he was all she needed, all she truly wished to have. So it would of course be best for him to forget her entirely, not to waste on her a single thought.

He wanted to pursue her, to retrieve her, to retrieve his child, by suasion or if need be by force; he wanted to destroy her, to destroy himself. But he did none of these things. He merely felt a sudden exhausting weariness, a paralyzing fatigue which made action impossible. In a day, in a single instant, the years of his life caught up with him and became multiplied into a burden that he would never be able to shed.

He took a sip from his cup and pushed it aside, for the coffee was cold and tasted bitter, and peering over the jumble of tables through the gathering murk at the window, his eyes, as if suddenly restored to sight, perceived that it was actually beginning to rain.

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Continued from page 31

EXPLOITING THE SUN

While the pressure for more power increases, fossil fuel resources are dwindling. Even at the present rate of consumption coal and oil will be scarce in some areas in the next fifty years.

Some of the unrest in the world is caused by competition for these resources. For this reason Prof. Robert Emerson would exploit the sun, the one source of energy available to all mankind. He is one of a few men in laboratories around the world who are conducting basic research in photosynthesis—the process whereby plants trap energy from the sun.

To make more direct use of solar energy either plants will be made more efficient, or scientists will learn how plants change light into useful forms of energy and then duplicate the process in large power plants. Professor Emerson is therefore studying microscopic plants to find out how efficiently they utilize light energy, and his colleague, Prof. Eugene I. Rabinowitch, is trying to find out how energy passes from one chlorophyll molecule to another.

Professor Emerson points out that the discovery of the way plants make the most of solar radiation will be more revolutionary in its effect than the fission of uranium, because atomic energy will no longer be available when uranium supplies are exhausted.

Adventure in Glass

Continued from page 27

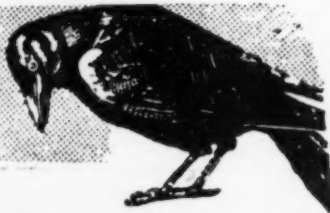
metal blowpipes into the red openings of the great furnace monster. Others are carrying a globe of molten glass to a bench and uncannily blowing and pinching it with tweezers into rare shiny shapes, while several ragged little boys, like so many baby devils, come running from all directions with freshly blown vases and jars borne on wooden sticks.

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The glass blowers remind us of fire eaters at a circus. We are fascinated with one little boy of around eleven or twelve who is blowing up a big glass bubble. His delicate hands keep fluttering as he moves his blowpipes slowly up and down, round and round. His cheeks are puffed and taut as he breathes a steady stream of air through the long tube. He has been an apprentice for four years, Señor Avalos explains, and just last month he was permitted to start making the simplest kind of blown glass vases.

He then goes on to explain that the glass craftsmen are trained by the apprentice system. There are fifty-five workers in the factory, seven of whom are master-craftsmen who can make all the intricate and difficult pieces, including the tibores, spherical vases, and pitchers called jarrones.

But a master-craftsman requires an arduous training period of at least four or five years. Boys from eight to fifteen years old are taken as apprentices. Every year some two or three hundred lads enter the factory. Of these only twenty to twenty-five remain for not all have the excellent coordination necessary, nor the steady nerves required, in this "breath-taking" profession.

Along with humble tasks the apprentice gets acquainted with the working of the factory and begins to learn the craft. After three or four years he becomes a kind of journeyman. There are three classes of journeymen—the third class worker who can do the simpler operations in fashioning the pieces; the second class worker who does slightly more difficult work; and a first class worker who does some intricate things such as putting handles on vases and water pitchers. After the worker has had experience in nearly every phase of the glass makers' work, he chooses, with the advice of the master-craftsmen, what work he can do best. He then becomes a specialist in that one thing. One worker will, for example, make vases only; another, goblets. As he is paid according to how much he produces, he can make more money this way.



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We tell Senor Avalos that it sounds precisely like the old craft system of the Middle Ages in Europe and he agrees with us. He then explains that glass blowing was the craft of the nobility. The French jealously guarded the art from all except those of noble blood. The saying had it that if glass making is a noble art, he who makes the glass must also be noble.

In sunny Catalan Street again we decide that this is not the devil's workshop but rather a factory of good little goblins who can materialize moonbeams, butterflies of flowers with a single puff on a magic pipe.

Ride to Sinaloa

Continued from page 22

loaded with plants, and we went in for a swim in the stream. It was a beautiful spot, and the weather had been kind. Not a rain cloud loomed on the horizon, to threaten us with an afternoon wetting.

In the still pools of the stream were still other varieties of small fishes which were, indeed, interesting to watch. One type in particular, a species of chichlid, was worth the whole trip. These little fellows were breeding in the shallow clear water and seemed not to mind us much as we watched. All stages of their nesting were to be seen in a few feet of water. We amused ourselves watching their life history unfold.

The males were resplendent with orange bands on their bodies, and greenish-blue edges to their fins; while the females were a rather dull brown. The thing that struck us first was the fact that the males were able to alter and increase the color of their bands at an instant's notice. Sometimes the orange would fade until it was just a lighter band on the brown background of fish; but when the male was near his nest or was approached by another male, the colors flamed to intense hues.

The nests were cleared spots on the sandy bottom where a small patch of eggs had been deposited. Like many of their family, these chichlids share all the parental duties and take turns fanning eggs with their



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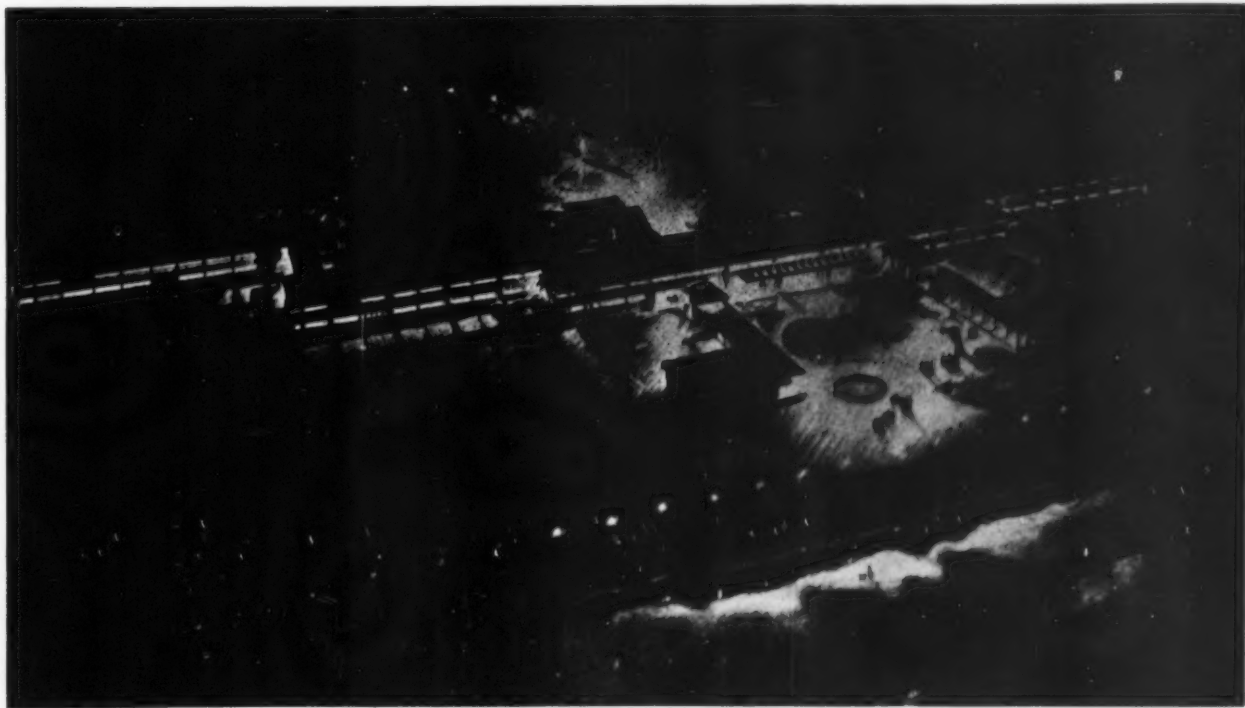
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tails to keep the water circulating. While one is thus occupied, the other is busily darting this way and that at any intruding fish, to clear an area about two feet in diameter. It was here that the males showed their most beautiful colorings.

Other nests had hatched and the parents were herding their young about in little schools. The babies formed a small gray cloud in the water, behind the mother, while the father darted in circles about them in a one-man fighter escort. We wondered as we sat and watched this little drama, how many people had crossed this stream without knowing the wonders of its aquatic life, too busy or hurried to stop and quietly watch. We wished, as we had many times before, for a moving-picture outfit with lenses capable of capturing this sort of thing in a color movie. It would be nice to share such moments with classes of natural history and nature clubs in the States.

Finally we started home, having discovered that the sun had been traveling on, all this time. We would never be able to make the return trip in daylight. Darkness overtook us, just out of the village of Agua Caliente, with its characteristic suddenness, in these latitudes. One minute it was light; the next, the sun went down and it was dark. There was no twilight. Soon I began to wonder if it had been a good idea to send Chico ahead. As soon as we got into the deep canyon the trail became something that we had to believe in, without seeing. There was no moon and the rich growth, overhead, screened out any starlight that might have helped. Small noises along the trail seemed magnified many times. Somewhere, not too far away, I heard the coughing of a jaguar. The fact that there had been cattle killed between Caliente and

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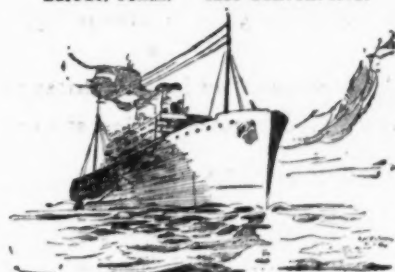
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Guirecoba the last few nights brought home the realization that these big cats were in the community, in force, and on the hunt. As usual, we carried no gun of any sort.

There was nothing to do but give my horse his head and trust his instinct to get us home. The other horses followed, and we felt our way along under the giant trees. Now and then I would call back to tell Eunice and Philip to duck for a branch that had caught me in the face. We couldn't make very good time.

Someone had told me, once, that jaguars would not bother people if they whistled, so I started whistling as merry a tune as I could. This reminded me of another, and the first thing I knew I was singing and the family joining in. I am sure we all forgot whatever dangers the trail might have held, as we sang together to the rhythm of our horses' feet.

* * *

Sometimes the trail followed the stream bed, and other stretches were along steep high banks, where we could hear the rushing water below, like distant thunder. The horses were good. They never seemed to falter or miss a step. Now and then we could enter clearings that were illuminated with the largest and brightest fireflies that I have ever seen. They were so thick that they would actually light on us and our horses. The lights were in pairs, pointed down. They went on and off with the mathematical regularity of an electric advertisement. Each one would light up an area about a foot in diameter, bright enough to see in detail. I doubt if we shall ever see a more weirdly beautiful sight than those glowing insects made, as they illuminated small bits of the forest about us.



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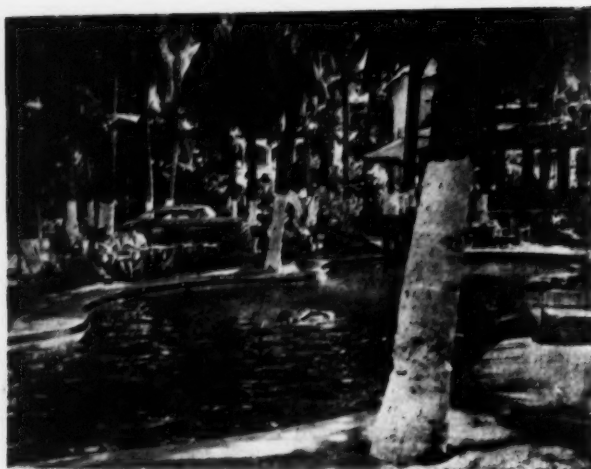


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My horse stopped in the trail, and I could hear by the rushing of the water that here was the place where we had forded the stream in the morning. In the daylight there had been nothing to it but here, in almost total darkness, the thing took on a different aspect. I wished for a little moonlight or even a couple of the fire flies we had left behind, but here was nothing but darkness and hulking forms of huge cypress trunks and the sound of angry water. I remembered from the morning that there was just one narrow trail cleared across the stream. Above and below this ford was a mass of foaming water and jagged boulders that it would be impossible for the horses to survive.

My mount seemed to be smelling the ground, along the bank, so I gave him all the rein. Presently he seemed to find the right spot and, raising his head, started across. The other horses followed. Water boiled up under the horses' bellies and we pulled our feet up, to keep dry as possible. They came through without a hitch or a stumble.

The average Sonora horse wouldn't look like much at a stock show, or win any prizes at a race track; but if they were having a contest of equine I.Q., I would enter a wiry little buckskin stallion from Sonora. After that night, the phrase "horse sense" took on a great deal more meaning for me.

One more low hill through lighter trees, and we were looking down on the village of Guirocoba. The flicker of cookfires sparkled from some of the thatched houses, and here and there a brighter light from an open doorway indicated that the occupants could afford the luxury of a kerosene lamp. Over to the right we could see the still brighter lights from the ranch house and, at the gate, a lantern that Mac had hung to welcome us. It had been a wonderful ride; one we would never forget.



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Dolls of Puebla

Continued from page 15

ped. But, like their mistress they are wonderfully enduring, each embodies an idea and holds fast to it.

They are five pesos (fifty-seven cents) each, the old lady states during one of her vigorous monologues, which is not so much a sales talk as the sharing of some old romance or secret. When a customer selects three and not so much offers as awards her twelve pesos for the group, she bursts into loud glee as at the ultimate absurdity. "No, no, no," she repeats between chuckles which engulf her frame. The contest between the terribly old and implacable doll—survivor of some other day, some floodlit era—and the young, bright tourist is too uneven. She gets fifteen pesos and the cast, in which each player is a star, has lost three more members.

Day of the Saint

Continued from page 14

of Tipitan. His father would be back by early afternoon, and Tomasino would be in trouble if the boots weren't ready.

The holy blessings were being made at the steps of the church, and the Madonna had already come down from the altar and was being lifted to the special cart. Tomasino shoved the polish on the last boot and scrubbed at it with a rag. Tomasino jumped up and ran, ran to catch the long line of people, the

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chanting, singing people, the banners and the wonderful, bright ribbons that floated in the breeze from the paper arch over the Madonna's head. Firecrackers were already popping, and sky rockets had been zooming and bursting since dawn. Tomasino ran, his little feet curling up the dust behind him, his breath in puffs, his hands tightly holding the two smooth white eggs.

Yes, he stumbled. What else could happen to a little boy with his eyes on a shining wonder in front of him, and his feet not able to keep up with his excitement and his haste? He stumbled and the eggs were crushed under him, sticky, and filled with red dust; smeared on the front of his shirt and trousers.

Very slowly Tomasino stood up. He looked down at his body, at his hands, at the red dust. He did not dare raise his eyes to the procession that was now finishing at the plaza and would in a few minutes pass by the very place he stood on its way into the church again.

So he was a crow after all, not worthy even to place two eggs upon the chariot at the feet of the Blessed Virgin. Tomasino did not cry. There was nothing to cry about. It had been a mistake, that was all.

His head lowered, Tomasino slowly scuffed red dust over the broken shells. He moved his feet carefully, almost indifferently, sidewise. He did not even want to wash the dirt and egg from his clothes or his hands. It was a punishment.

As he stood so, waiting for his uncle to discover him, for the boys and girls to mock him, for the crime

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of destroying two eggs to come down upon his black thatched head, the procession with the Blessed Virgin came toward him, swept around the corner and down the street, chanting and singing.

The priest walked in front, swinging the silver dispenser with its blessed holy water, scattered the drops in the sunlight, wove a pattern of sanctity with it, sparkling and whishing through the air. Tomasino looked up and saw him coming, tall and commanding, his dark cassock billowing out in the wind. The wind rocked the cart too, and swayed the Madonna as though she were to fall forward, and dust swirled about the feet of the people who came, chanting, singing and chanting down upon the little crow, who waited, unable to move.

"Ave Maria... full of grace... Blessed are they... O, Beati—" the words came rushing about his head and he was lifted into them, lost in them, taken hold of by hands and words, turned around, marched up the steps of the church, into the cool vaulted nave and down the aisle up to the great high altar itself.

The people of Tipitan, peering upward in the dim cathedral light, hushed with amazement to see at the high altar itself, the figure of a very small crow with the lighted candles flickering down on the shiny black head.

Tomasino's mother, crowded in the the others, kneeling in the aisle, dropped the roboso from her

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face as she looked, for what she saw was a very small boy with a great secret in his face. But a small boy for all that, lifting his hands, grubby as they were with yellow egg yolk and red dust.

And Tomasino's father, coming home up the hill was surprised at the tremendous silence in the church, and stopped by to see what was happening, for even one who doubted so can be curious.

What he looked upon brought him to one knee and pulled the hat from his head. For what he saw was himself, full of belief, and wonder. A small boy asking nothing but knowing the answer at the same moment. And if, in the hush of the candle light, in the great vaulted cathedral with the blessed Madonna smiling down upon them, with the sunlight shafting through the stained glass upon her, if Tomasino's father did not go upon both knees, if he kept one up to rest his arm upon, well, a man of reason must save something for his ego, mustn't he?

The Villain, Inflation

Continued from page 12

but added little to productive investment. The war-time barriers to imports and productive internal investment, coupled with higher income from exports, also stimulated speculative use of accumulated liquid assets, with inflationary effect.

In short, during the war period, a flood of money poured into Mexico, far in excess of the supply of goods and services available. Those external pressures added heavily to the inflationary policies of the governments' expanded program of public works, industrial and agricultural development, to which was also added the non-productive military expenditures in Mexico itself.

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In addition to other noted inflationary aspects of the industrialization program, wartime bottlenecks extended the lag of production behind investment. Transport deficiencies, labor troubles, fuel shortages, and obstacles to machinery importation were among the factors that caused the program's monetary expansion to run far ahead of output increases. With savings and taxes outpaced by private and public investment, the industrialization program would have been somewhat inflationary even without the emergency dislocations, but with them it was seriously so.

Consequently, by the war's end, 1945-6, Mexico's inflation had reached alarming proportions. The future of industrialization in Mexico was widely in doubt, and there was cause for anxiety over the nation's political as well as economic stability. But, as the Aleman administration took control, it soon became apparent that external deflationary tendencies were setting in, which would require at least temporary continuance of internally inflationary public policies as a counterbalance.

With the war's end and the resumption of civilian production in the United States, foreign demand for Mexico's emergency swollen exports fell off, and pent up Mexican demand for both capital and consumer goods launched a rapid expansion of imports. The trade balance abruptly reversed. During 1946 and 1947, the adverse balance of payments totaled a quarter of a billion dollars. The excess of imports over exports during those two years was nearly double the accumulated reverse balance from 1939 through 1945. The Bank of Mexico's related reserves dropped from an early 1946 peak of 390 million dollars to 42 million dollars during the following 30 months.

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Speculative capital began to withdraw; the amount of money in circulation and prices leveled off; external pressures for credit contraction began to be left. The Aleman administration was faced with the possibility of a serious economic deflation. War-accumulated savings were being dissipated on highly priced, non-essential imports, and the industrialization program threatened to stall. Consequently, the government moved on a broad front to effect a stable postwar readjustment.

The peso was devalued by 78 per cent beginning in July 1948. Various restrictions were slapped on imports to curtail the outflow of dollar exchange and to channel purchases into productive enterprise, with tariffs subsequently hiked for the same professed purpose. The United States Export-Import Bank was tapped for 54 million dollars in 1947 and 1948, and more credit was sought from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Long-term private foreign investment was encouraged with substantial results. Public policy also sought to shift credit from imports to productive investment in domestic enterprise in industry and agriculture, while allowing reasonable credit expansion.

At the same time, the Federal Government, after a 1946 budget surplus, returned to deficit spending on public works to counter external deflationary forces with inflationary internal pressure. The federal deficit was 191 million pesos in 1947 and 278 millions in 1948, and expenditures for public works were 36.4 per cent of the budget in 1946 and 38.2 per cent in 1947. A campaign for tourists got under way—with net receipts soaring from 82.8 million dollars in 1947 to more than 150 millions in 1950—and migrant worker remittances also helped. Various official policies were applied to stimulate export movements. The tax structure was reformed both for increased revenue and for somewhat more flexibility in its use as an instrument of economic policy.

* * *

Devaluation, the course of world events, and governmental policy consequently effected a readjustment that carried the Mexican economy to a period of relative equilibrium from 1948 to mid-1950. The federal budget began to run a surplus in 1949 that carried through 1951, with an increase in revenue and adjustment of the public works program to govern-

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mental income. Three times as many imports were going into production as into consumption, and total imports had dropped steadily from 719 million dollars in 1947 to about 500 millions in 1950. By 1950 increased exports also began to contribute to the favorable balance of payments. By mid-1949 the balance of payments in foreign exchange again had become favorable, running a surplus of 59.5 million dollars by year's end.

From late 1948 through 1950, Mexico obtained foreign loans totaling 180 million dollars, 60 per cent from Export-Import Bank and 20 per cent from the World Bank, and spent 75 millions of it during the same period. The internal public debt became stationary, and the domestic floating debt decreased somewhat. The peso was stabilized in June 1949 at 8.65 to dollar. Vocational training and managerial experience were beginning to curtail the inflationary aspects of production inefficiency.

By early 1950, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America concluded in its study the following year, the Mexican economy had been stabilized in these broad respects. The ten-year inflationary spiral was terminated. Industrial and agricultural developments were largely consolidated. Monetary expansion was adjusted to real production growth. The equilibrium of savings and investment was restored in both governmental and private sectors, although, as investment requirements still tend to outrun the domestic capacity to save, that equilibrium may prove unstable. In short, 'until mid-1950, Mexico seemed to have reached a stage where it could maintain the rate of development of the previous 15 years without running the risk of inflation of domestic origin.'

Whether Mexico actually had achieved the happy condition of economic stability that would hold to-

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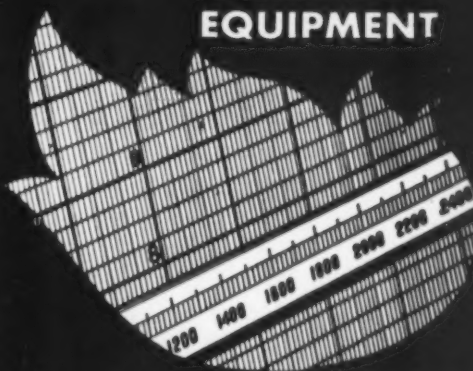
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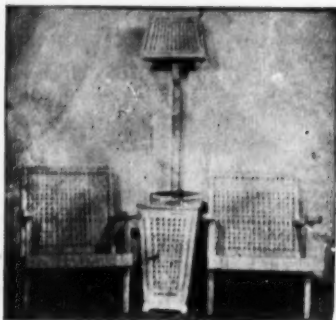
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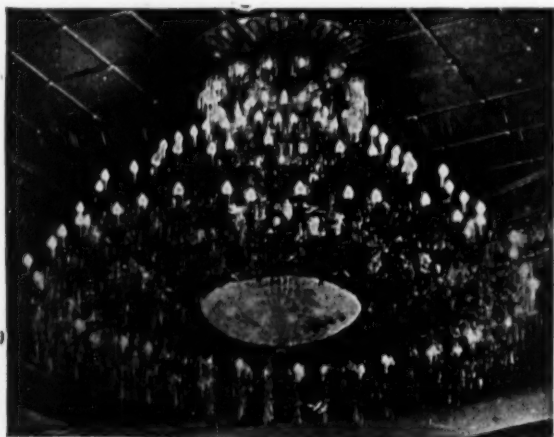
gether under a continued high rate of economic development, world events did not allow time for proof. In June 1950, the outbreak of hostilities in Korea, with the attending acceleration of the international rearmament race fired by fear of a World War III, renewed the inflationary spiral in Mexico. Those revived external inflationary factors, closely resembling World War II pressures, were not superimposed this time on internal inflationary policies. The Mexican government, as a result of painful experience in the 1940s, acted quickly to counter the fresh threat to its people's economic welfare.

* * *

The Mexican government attributed the 1950-51 inflation burst primarily to external factors growing out of the Korean war and world rearmament. It also blamed adverse weather conditions that curtailed the expected flow of foodstuff from domestic agriculture. President Aleman, as advised by Finance Minister Ramon Beteta, marshaled the government's economic policies to combat the situation, which, as he reported to the people in his September 1951 state-of-the-nation address, he then felt to be under reasonable control.

In mid-1950, prices began to rise markedly in the United States, both for Mexican strategic exports such as metals and for the goods that Mexico must import. The tourist trade boomed, with 400,000 visitors spending up to 200 million dollars during the following year. Migratory Mexican workers began to flow back across the Rio Grande, sending dollar remittances home. Short term, and especially speculative 'flight' capital poured into the country, rising from 3 million dollars during the first half of 1950 to 10 millions during the second half.

Though domestic private investment and wages had a minor influence, the new inflation was largely caused by the returned 'favorable' balance of payments in foreign exchange. Monetary reserves had increased 59.5 million dollars during the second half of 1949, and only 10.7 millions during the first half of 1950; but the increase from July to December 1950 was more than a 100 million dollars. By 31 July 1951, reserves stood at 211 million dollars, against 141 millions on the same date a year previous, despite exceptionally high imports during the first half of 1951 and other factors causing a mid-year decline subsequently considered to be under control. Though Mexico ran 125-million-dollar trade deficit in 1951, other exchange factors caused 'considerable improvement' in monetary reserves, the Bank of Mexico reported in February 1952.



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The new inflation brought on a fresh private building boom, comparable with that of 1944-6, and prices generally soared. The wholesale price index jumped 11 per cent during the last six months of 1950, in contrast to a 17 per cent rise over the 1948-9 period. Though the effectiveness of execution left much to be desired, the Mexican government adopted emergency anti-inflation measures far broader and stronger on paper than those employed in the United States.

The government continued its fiscal policy of budget surpluses (equivalent to public savings) through 1951, reducing the public debt. Direct import restrictions were relaxed early in 1951, but termination of the 1942 reciprocal trade treaty with the United States on 1 January 1951, permitted a higher tariff structure both protective and adverse to non-essential imports. From September 1950 to May 1951 agricultural and industrial machinery and other capital goods accounted for 76 per cent of imports, consumers goods only 24 per cent, the total value of imports during the period being nearly 5 billion pesos. Mexico was preparing against a shortage of capital goods imports from a United States at war. Meanwhile, export surpluses were regulated in the attempt to protect domestic supply and hold down prices at home, but by mid-1952 the government was able to reduce export levies on a wide range of items.

* * *

The Mexican government also reaffirmed peso stabilization, further to discourage speculative foreign capital. In fact, in July 1952, it revalued the peso upward, from 8.64 to 8.50 to the dollar. It renewed its stabilization agreement with the United States Treasury, which accepted a 50-million-dollar obligation to purchase pesos if necessary; and Mexico could draw out at will its 22 million dollars in the International Monetary Fund if needed.



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In late 1949, the Federal Government set up a system of anti-inflationary credit control, applying it in January 1951, tightening enforcement later in the year. Except for loans required for high priority industrial and agricultural operations, bank credit expansion was virtually frozen by June. The government also was urging higher public savings. During 1950-51, a 100-million-peso issue of government savings bonds was fully floated and a new issue of 200 millions was authorized. Nacional Financiera trust and participation certificates were more than doubled to 934 million pesos. As a result, money in circulation dropped from 6,447 million pesos in March 1951, to 6,119 millions in July. On 1 September, President Aleman claimed that the anti-inflationary measures recommended for Latin America by the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in July were in full effect in Mexico, adding: 'Mexican prices have compared favorably with those of Europe and America. Effective purchasing power of our money has a real and permanent value in buying articles abroad.'

In addition, the Federal Government aimed its tax policy not only at higher revenue but also toward restraining income of consumers, with income taxation accounting for about 29 per cent of revenues. Finally, emergency legislation of December 1950 was put into force the following year, giving the executive direct power to control prices and distribution of goods, an authority, however, difficult to enforce in relatively unorganized markets and without strict rationing to counter black marketing. The executive does have rationing and materials-allocation authority, and he may even take over private plants to enforce production. He also may raise or lower tariff rates as an economic-control measure.

A special means commission was set up to handle the effects of that shortage. CEIMSA government stores were established to handle food necessities, and anti-hoarding regulations were applied. Traveling markets and shops for public employees were inaugurated. The government also laid out 93½ million pesos in subsidies during 1950-51 to combat the rising food prices, and intensified its effort to encourage increased food production.

The Mexican government apparently has policies devised and authority acquired reasonably to control the new inflation growing out of fresh world tension. Whether the program will prove a success depends both on the effectiveness of its administration and the further course of world events. Barring a major global war, the Mexican economy should be able to weather the current storm without unbearable hardships and inconveniences being inflicted upon the people.



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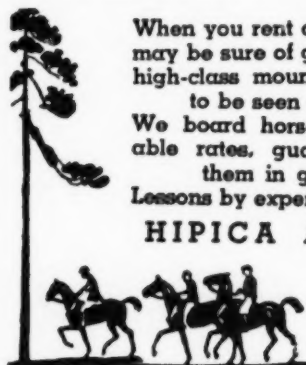
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It is a fact, however, that the newest blow of inflation again has fallen hardest on the weakest economic groups: unorganized or loosely organized labor, the subsistence farmer, relatively fixed-salaried employees of government and private enterprise, and families living on the fixed-rate income of former savings. The effect has been an unhealthy redistribution of wealth and income, widening again, at least temporarily, the already broad gap between the well-to-do minority and the poverty-stricken masses. Popular resentment over that economic dislocation could upset the recent achievement of relative political stability in Mexico. The March 1952 tax riots in Oaxaca were a pertinent warning. This problem must be the first concern of the Aleman administration's successor, who may remember that rampant inflation helped undermine invincible Diaz dictatorship. Significantly, President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, in his inaugural address on 1 December 1952, placed greatest emphasis on a promised program toward reducing the cost of living.

White-Collar Girl

Continued from page 10

One look at her innocent face dispelled a sudden uncomfortable suspicion. "Felicitaciones!" I cried.

We grinned at each other in a burst of feminine warmth and shook hands again.

"My Gabriel is an artist," she went on, "the youngest and most talented in all the country. But there are twelve in his family and he cannot earn enough money with his pictures. So he works at the factory, making designs for the textiles. A month ago he was able to buy this piece of cloth for me. You must meet Gabriel, Señora. He is so good and very learned too."

María and Gabriel are shyly and romantically in love. On Saturday afternoon, María goes to the textile factory where Gabriel lingers after working hours, and he shows her his latest designs. A truly gifted and sensitive artist, he draws inspiration from the Mexican scene, handicrafts, and folk feeling. "When we are married," he says, "we will travel through South America and I will study the folk art."

"And New York!" exclaims María. "How I would love to see the skyscrapers. Perhaps we will go there, too."

Gabriel shakes off a slight frown. "Yes, New York too. We will go there, I promise you."

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María and Gabriel love each other deeply but with decorum. For them there will be a proper church wedding with organ and candles, and the bride in shining white. But when? Gabriel, who insists that his wife must not work, is waiting for his younger brothers and sisters to become self-supporting.

In María's family there are only four. To her salary is added the smaller income of her sister, a shop clerk. Her father, a business failure, is not well enough to start anew, nor has he the capital; he earns a little by dabbling in real estate. Every peso goes to uphold the bourgeois standards of a respectable family which has a front to maintain before the world. Its members must be well dressed. The home must be well furnished—that is, cluttered with the solid, characterless articles which are the proud symbols of the middle class.

On Sunday, María and Gabriel promenade around the plaza listening to the band, contentedly alone among the swarms of people. They sit on a bench and their hands meet. They go to the movies where a Mexican tale of tears and heartbreak tells them that lovers must suffer. All will come out right in the end—and if not, the fragile beauty of the music-swelled finale ennobles suffering and makes it akin to holiness.

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